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# RELIGION IN LIFE

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# Russian Religion: Its Evolution Through Revolution

PITIRIM A. SOROKIN

**T**HE prevalent conception concerning the Russian Orthodox Church, and the clergy and religion in general, like many other ideas about Russia, has been not only grossly inaccurate but positively grotesque. Fostered by Communist propaganda designed to justify the militant atheism of Communist rulers and their cruel persecution of religious faiths during the Revolution, these ideas picture the Russian Orthodox religion as a primitive potpourri compounded of ignorance, prejudice and superstition, decked out in Oriental ritualism; the clergy as a mongrel breed of magicians, witch doctors, prestidigitators and exploiters; and the cultural role of the Church as that of an "opiate of the people's mind" whose primary social function was to assist the autocratic Czarist regime to exploit the masses and keep them in subjection. In addition, it is claimed that the Orthodox Church, in co-operation with the government, ruthlessly suppressed all other religions. Imbued with such notions, large circles outside Russia, including even part of the Christian clergy, have felt that the Communist antireligious policy was not without justification.

It is hardly necessary to point out the underlying fallacies. The actual character and the sociocultural role of the Russian Orthodox Church, as well as the true position of other faiths in Russia, may be summarized as follows:

1. Owing to the rather intimate contacts of the Slavic tribes with Byzantium and Bulgaria, Christianity began to penetrate Russia as early as the ninth and tenth centuries.
2. Its influence became so strong that in due course it became the official, or state religion. This step, however, was not taken hastily. An investigation and comparison of the relative merits of the Jewish, Mohammedan and "Latin" religions was made, and only after a thoroughgoing examination of each of them was the Byzantine-Bulgarian form of Christianity finally adopted.
3. The Greek form of Christianity was at that time not yet sharply differentiated either theologically or formally from the "Latin" form, whose seat was at Rome. Dogmatic differences were then of secondary

importance, the principal issues being psychosocial factors and rivalry for administrative supremacy. Constantinople, or Byzantium, was the chief heir of Greco-Roman culture; one of the foremost centers of Christianity in the world; the seat of virtually the most powerful empire in Christendom, far surpassing at that time in the fields of the fine arts, science, philosophy, law, and so forth. Moreover, the Byzantine religion had emerged from the "Iconoclastic" struggle as a sound and virile faith. Russia's choice was both comprehensible and sensible from many standpoints. It gave pagan Russia a fully developed form of Christianity. It introduced well-educated Greek priests, missionaries, *et cetera*, who constituted Russia's first religious teachers and clergy. Byzantium supplied, moreover, the artists, architects, and other craftsmen essential for the erection and decoration of churches and the building of ecclesiastical schools, hospitals, orphanages, almshouses and similar institutions. Again, Byzantium furnished learned scribes who translated or transcribed the most important existing religious books, including the Scriptures and the *Nomokanon*, or Byzantine code of canon law.

4. Owing to the rapid diffusion of Byzantine Christianity (which was destined gradually to be Russianized, by imperceptible degrees), it became one of the basic forces in the historical development of the Russian government, society and culture and an integral part of the psychology of the Russian people, which can hardly be conceived of apart from its influence. Its power is typically illustrated by the striking transformation which it wrought in the personality of Prince (or "Saint") Vladimir, who introduced it, and in that of his immediate successors. Extremely sensual, violent and belligerent by nature, after his conversion he became so gentle that, heeding the biblical injunction, "Thou shalt not kill," he hesitated to punish even criminals. In the spirit of Christian charity he gave his "goods to feed the poor." He built churches, orphan asylums and ecclesiastical schools. The notable law code, "Russian Truth" (*Russkaia Pravda*), enacted by his successor, Prince Jaroslav the Wise (1016-1054), abolished capital punishment and torture for all crimes, replacing these penalties with monetary fines. The next distinguished prince, Vladimir Monomach (1113-1125), both in his way of life and in his "Testament" bequeathed to his successors, reveals the profound metamorphosis of a pagan Norse warrior into a meek and lowly follower of the Nazarene. "Have the fear of God in your hearts and perform incessantly the work of charity—this is the foundation of everything good." "Don't forswear your oath." "Do not

permit the strong to harm the weak." "Do not kill either the innocent or the guilty, not even if the guilty deserve the death penalty." "When you and your troops are traveling through the Russian lands, do not allow your guard or your retinue to exploit and oppress the population; wherever you stop, give food and drink to all who ask for them." "Get up early, before the sunrise; pray to God; and then sit down with your companions to deliberate on the state affairs and to render justice." One can hardly imagine a greater contrast to the pre-Christian pagan warrior!

Early Russian Christianity expressed itself not only in preaching and divine service, but in a fundamental reshaping of the character of the people, their institutions, and their culture. It was responsible for the establishment of Russia's first schools; it produced the first law codes; introduced courts for judgment of the clergy as well as of the people in ethical and religious matters; it improved family life and raised the general standard of morality; it fostered charitable institutions and a system of social service; it opposed and ameliorated slavery and serfdom; it shaped the hierarchical principle of social stratification and differentiation; it translated and circulated the first books; it initiated the fine arts; and it laid the foundations of Russian philosophy and *Weltanschauung*. In a word, its religious, ethical, social and cultural impact was overwhelming.

5. Throughout the entire subsequent history of Russia, the Christian Church has been particularly salutary and helpful in the tragic crises when the independence or the very existence of the nation has been at stake, as during the Tatar invasions; the incursions of Turks, Poles, Swedes and Teutons; the assaults of Napoleon and Hitler's legions; and the grave periods of internal anarchy, such as the "Times of Trouble" at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Without the ministrations of the Church it is doubtful whether Russia could have managed to survive certain of these crises.

In view of the manifold and vital functions performed by the Russian Orthodox religion, it has probably played a more important role than any branch of the Christian Church in most of the European countries. In its absence the structure of Russian society and culture would have been as inchoate and incomprehensible as that of medieval Europe without Roman Catholicism. Hence the absurdity of the conception of the Russian ecclesiastical system as a burden artificially imposed upon the people.

This identification of the state religion with the national soul explains the exclusive value attached to it in Russia's social and cultural life up

to the Revolution and its gradually increasing value since the close of the destructive phase of the Revolution. Russia has hardly known the principle of racial, or ethnic discrimination. If groups such as the Jews, Poles or pagans have been discriminated against, this has been due not to their race or nationality but to their *religion*; and as soon as they have accepted Russian Orthodox Christianity, all limitations upon their rights and privileges have automatically ceased.

This accounts also for the somewhat privileged position allotted to the Russian Orthodox religion (in contradistinction especially to sects) before the beginning of the twentieth century. It did not differ sharply from the pre-eminence of the Anglican Church among the various other religious denominations of England; and it was certainly less striking than the exclusive sway exercised by the dominant church faction in colonial Massachusetts. All the Christian denominations, as well as Judaism, Mohammedanism and many pagan religions, were tolerated and openly carried on their respective activities. Moreover, it was the state which actually paid the greater part of the salaries of the Roman Catholic and Protestant clergy. The only sects that were prohibited were those regarded as anti-social, such as the Khlysty, whose revivals were attended by sexual orgies or, the Skoptzy, whose practices involves the mutilation of the genitalia. It was but natural that the government should have encouraged conversion to the Orthodox faith. But insofar as conversion to other religions was hindered by legal methods, it was inhibited only indirectly, in the sense that a convert forfeited certain of the privileges he had enjoyed as a member of the Orthodox Church. Such discriminations as existed (for the most part *de facto* rather than legal) were eventually abolished by the constitution and reforms of 1906 and the following years.

Finally, the record of the Russian state Church is far freer from the guilt of large-scale religious wars and persecutions than that of the Roman Catholic Church and of some of the Protestant denominations (notably the Calvinists). In its treatment of "heretics" and unbelievers it exhibits nothing comparable to the cruelty of the Inquisition, the ruthless wars against the Albigensians and Huguenots or the massacre of St. Bartholomew.

Apart from the coercive measures employed by the Kiev government after its adoption of Christianity, virtually the sole historical example of serious religious dissension relates to the sharp clash between the so-called "Old Believers" and the "Nikonians," during the reign of Czar Alexei Mikhailovitch (1645-1676). The reforms carried out by the Patriarch

Nikon—concerning such matters as the correct text of the Scriptures, the proper spelling of the name of Jesus, the representation of the Cross with four or eight arms, the increase in the authority of the Patriarch at the expense of that of the Czar, and so forth—encountered stubborn resistance. This opposition led in several instances to persecution of the “Old Believers” at the hands of the state. But, despite its acuteness, this clash was merely an *internal* dispute—not a struggle between Russian and non-Russian forms of Christianity.

Taken in its theological, philosophical, moral and social aspects, the Russian Orthodox religion differs from Roman Catholicism and Protestantism in many ways; but none of these differences affords a proper basis for regarding the Russian type of Christianity as inferior to any of the other important Christian denominations.

Theologically and ritually it is similar to the “High Church” wing of the Protestant Episcopal Church. Theologically, the main difference between Eastern Christianity and Roman Catholicism relates to the famous term *filioque* in the Roman Catholic Credo—that is, the question whether the Holy Ghost emanates from God the Father only, as the Eastern Church contends, or from God the Son also (*filioque*), as is held by the Roman Catholic Church. This difference, as is well known, was one of the principal bones of contention responsible for the final cleavage of Christianity (in 1054) into its Eastern and Western branches.

In its spirit and philosophy the Russian Orthodox Church occupies an intermediate position between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. It is, of course, very difficult to give in a few words an authentic picture of the “soul” of any great religion. But the essential differences may be summed up as follows: The Russian religion is less dogmatic and authoritarian than Roman Catholicism, but more so than Protestantism. The hierarchical principle in the Russian Church is more fully developed than in most of the Protestant denominations, but less so than in the Church of Rome. The Russian Patriarch has never possessed as much authority as the Pope; and he has never claimed either supremacy over the other patriarchs or infallibility as does the Pope. The Russian Patriarch has been simply *primus inter pares* among the high prelates of the Russian Church. To eminent Russian thinkers like Dostoevsky, Roman Catholicism, as a religio-political system, appeared as a marvelous mechanism that had forfeited, to a large extent, the vital spirit of Jesus. Protestantism, *per contra*, impressed them as essentially a protest against Catholicism—a neg-



ative phenomenon that could neither thrive nor even continue to exist in the absence of the object of its protest. In his "Three Ideas" and in the "Legend of the Great Inquisitor" in his *Brothers Karamazoff*, Dostoevsky develops a striking picture of the Roman Catholic, Protestant and Russian churches. The Russian Church, he feels, occupies a middle position. It is much less of a mechanism than the Church of Rome, and much less deeply imbued with a spirit of protest than the Protestant denominations. Similarly, it is less formal than the Catholic system and more formal than Protestantism. It gives wider latitude to human reason, experience and intuition in religion and ethics than Catholicism, but less than many Protestant denominations. It does not require unconditional and unquestioning acceptance of the dicta of the church authorities, thus permitting a much larger margin of autonomy than does Roman Catholicism for the searching mind of the believer; neither does it leave the whole matter to the reason or inspiration of the individual, as do certain Protestant denominations. It is more intimate and warmhearted, less coldly rational and authoritarian than Catholicism, but less "anarchic" and "spontaneously revivalistic" than Protestantism. It strongly stresses the free, spontaneous, all-embracing love of God to man and of man to God, rather than unquestioning obedience to the dicta of authority, as in Roman Catholicism and Calvinism, or the utilitarian freedom characteristic of most Protestant sects.

According to Dostoevsky, Catholicism made three primary forces the very foundation of its teaching and existence, namely, authority, mystery (or dogma) and miracles. And by means of considerable exaggerations, he and other notable Russian religious thinkers bring out several significant differences between the Russian, Roman Catholic and Protestant types of "religious soul." The principle of Caesarism has certainly found far less authentic expression in the Russian ecclesiastical system than in Roman Catholicism or Calvinism. The same is true of the principle of blind obedience to dogma or that of empirical utilitarianism in the field of religion.

In its spirit and philosophy the Russian Orthodox Church is much closer to the Eastern Church Fathers, such as Gregory of Nyssa, Saint Basil, Pseudo-Dionysius and Saint John Chrysostom, than to Saint Augustine; and it finds among Western religious thinkers a closer affinity to Johannus Scotus Erigena and Saint Francis of Assisi than to Saint Thomas Aquinas or Calvin, or to Pope Leo the Great, Pope Gregory IX and similar distinguished organizers of the Church of Rome. Its spirit of mysticism has been as strong as that of Roman Catholicism, and even stronger than



that of Protestantism; but this spirit has exhibited more in informal and hence more diverse and unorthodox patterns than that of Western Catholicism.

These points of divergence between the Russian religion and other types of Christianity suffice to show that the former is in no sense more primitive, superstitious or obscurantist than the latter. The intermediate position which the Russian religion occupies between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism in itself argues against such an assumption. Avoiding the two extremes, it has impressed many thoughtful minds as being more balanced and harmonious than either Roman Catholicism or Protestantism. When one studies both its past and its comparatively recent theological and philosophical works, one is forced to admit that in their own way they are as profound as the foremost contributions of Roman Catholic and Protestant theological and philosophical thought.

*Hierarchically* the Russian Church was originally subordinated to the Byzantine Church, being under the jurisdiction of its Patriarch. In a comparatively short time, however, it became actually and then legally independent of this jurisdiction. The Russian Patriarch, *elected* by the authorized representatives of the Russian religion, became its head. At no time in its history was it subject to the control of the Roman Catholic See.

The administrative and guiding role of the Russian Patriarch was a powerful one, and most of the patriarchs discharged their duties faithfully and to good effect, especially during periods of acute crisis. Such names as those of Abbots Theodosy Petchersky, Sergius Radonejsky, Abram Palytzyn, Dionysius and the patriarchs Hermogen, Peter, Alexis, Thomas and Philipp, are stamped indelibly upon the pages of Russian history. The pre-Patriarchal and Patriarchal epochs were, on the whole, heroic, creative and democratic. Directly and indirectly the Church was a genuine *Corpus Mysticum*. Its leaders and clerical personnel were recruited from all classes of the population. The hierarchy was democratic in spirit, closely united with the people, and largely elective—a true *sobor*, or religious collective entity. Thus it was no less democratic and no more autocratic than the other Christian religions of the West.

Unfortunately, the reforms of Peter the Great terminated the Patriarchy (in 1721) and considerably curtailed the independence and the creative role of the Church. Like other "enlightened monarchical reformers," he sought to eliminate all rivalry between the Church and the State, and all efforts to block the reforms initiated by the government—in a word,

to destroy all independence of church policy. Hence he abolished the Patriarchy, replacing it with a collective *Synod*, an ecclesiastical college composed of metropolitans and bishops, as the supreme church authority, and appointing a High Procurator as his personal representative for the supervision of the Synod and the co-ordination of the Synod's policies with those of the government. The objective results of these ill-advised reforms were, among others, a certain loss of independence in connection with the judicial, social and economic functions of the Church; the bureaucratization of its administrative apparatus; the subordination of the hierarchy to the Czarist government; a decrease in the spontaneous collectivity of the Church (at least in the upper strata of the hierarchy); and the replacement of democratic principles by autocratic ones in the selection of the hierarchs and other leaders and in ecclesiastical functions in general. The vital creative unity of the Church in its upper ranks was supplanted by the official machinery so vigorously denounced by Dostoevsky.

But, while Peter's reforms radically changed the administrative mechanism in the upper strata, they did not fundamentally alter the basic character of the Russian religion; the religious aspirations, attitudes and beliefs of the people, or the functions of the rank and file of the clergy. These continued to function essentially as they had done before. The Church continued to stand by the people throughout the darkest periods of Russian history, such as those of the domination of the state by German cliques, the Napoleonic invasion, and the like. Similarly the people stood by the Church. Peter's reforms accordingly failed to sever the ties that bound the nation and the Church into a single unity.

If notable changes occurred in the period from 1721 to 1917, they were due not so much to the aforesaid reforms as to the general change of sociocultural conditions in Russia as in other parts of Europe, and to the altered mentality of some of the Russian classes. This change in the "cultural climate" led to a decrease of religious-mindedness on the part of the educated classes; a notable decline of the prestige of the Church among certain sections of the population; a weakening of the spiritual leadership of the Church; a slackening and bureaucratization of religious functions in the case of some of the priests and prelates, and a general decline in the creative role of the Church. The "subserviency of the Russian Church to Czardom" was by no means as widespread and serious as its calumniators have claimed.

Especially acute was the decline of religious feeling among the educated

classes. The more revolutionary element became open disbelievers and outright atheists, equally inimical to Christianity and to non-Christian faiths. A similar spirit of irreligiousness—marked by greater vulgarity—invaded other classes, notably the urban population. Though the bulk of the peasantry remained outwardly religious, their piety became merely a ritualistic affair. The living spirit of religion everywhere was withering. During the second half of the nineteenth century this process gained added momentum, continuing up to 1917. Hence it will be seen that the anti-religious trend was not initiated by the Revolution but existed long before it.

One of the first acts of the Revolution in March, 1917, was the proclamation by the Provisional Government (headed by Prince Lvov and then by Kerensky) of complete freedom of religion. Simultaneously the Church and the nation seized the opportunity to divest the Church of its subservience to the government, first introduced by the reforms of Peter the Great; to re-establish the Patriarchy at the place of the bureaucratic Synod; to eliminate all the undesirable traits that it had acquired, and to restore the heroic and truly creative role it had played before the reforms of Peter the Great. In the summer of 1917 an all-Russian Sobor (or Congress) of the duly elected representatives of all the faithful was held in Moscow and unanimously voted these and many other reforms. The Metropolitan Tikhon, a former representative of the Russian Church in the United States, was elected as Patriarch. The revival of religion and the Church began to proceed apace. If the Church had only been granted a few years for the consummation of this promising renaissance, there is hardly any doubt that a new creative and heroic religious epoch would have been ushered in.

Unfortunately, the Communist revolution attempted by every means to destroy religion in general, and the Russian Orthodox system in particular. Its murderous attacks were launched precisely at a time when the Russian Church had become as free and democratic as possible. The Communist government from the beginning declared for freedom of conscience but definitely restricted freedom of religion. In the name of militant atheism, it branded all religion as "an opiate of the people's mind" and embarked upon a pitiless and brutal persecution directed particularly against the Orthodox Church. Church buildings and other ecclesiastical property (including even gold, silver and valuable ritual objects) were seized by the government on the general ground of nationalization of all but personal property. Many churches were compulsory closed, being converted into

Communist clubs, warehouses, and so on. It was forbidden to give religious instruction to any group of persons with the exception of instruction in the family, where the number of those receiving such instruction must not exceed three. Even this was frowned upon and not infrequently penalized. During the years when the barest means of subsistence could be obtained only through ration cards, the clergy either were given no cards at all or were allotted a minimum ration sufficient only to prevent their "forgetting how bread smells" (the wording of Zinoviev, then a big Communist boss, later "purged" and liquidated). Furthermore, religious ceremonies could not be performed outside church buildings. Finally, more than a thousand of the clergy and religious-minded civilians were summarily arrested and executed. Hypocritically, the official reason given for the execution was "counterrevolutionary activities." But the falsity of the official subterfuge is all too clear. Several of my colleagues at the University of Petrograd and several of my friends and acquaintances were executed merely because of their active participation in religious activities: they had not the remotest connection with any real counterrevolutionary work. Exact statistics of these victims are not available; for during the destructive period of the Revolution, executions were conducted on such a large scale (about five hundred thousand were slain) that nobody bothered to record the number. The victims included at least twenty-eight bishops and twelve hundred and nineteen priests, to say nothing of the thousands of humbler believers who were imprisoned, sent to concentration camps, or condemned to hard labor and thus doomed to slow death.

Consider the children and other relatives of religious-minded persons, particularly those of the clergy who were discriminated against for "the sins of their fathers." Add to this the loss of civil and political rights suffered by the faithful. Consider, further, the atheistic propaganda, conducted by influential Communist leaders, officially sanctioned and financed, denouncing God, Christ, the Virgin and all the basic values of religion in the most unrestrained and frequently virulent and indecent terms. Under the threat of drastic punishment, such propaganda and other activities could not be openly opposed; no counterpropaganda or other resistance was tolerated.

Overtaking the Church at the moment of its revival and reconstruction, this persecution, rivalling almost any known to history, together with measures directed to the same end, exerted temporarily a profound influence. The younger generation, virtually deprived of religious instruction,

grew up either actively irreligious or at least wholly indifferent to religion. Many an adult, in the face of threatened punishment and the loss of certain privileges, lost much of his religious zeal. The Church itself split into several factions, including the "New Churchmen" (or Novo-Zerkovnik) who became subservient henchmen of the Communist government, and factions radically opposed to the government (these factions, of course, could openly exist only abroad, among the Russian exiles). The Patriarch Tikhon, as a prisoner of the Communist government, could exert no unifying power. But the chief problem was that the government refused to recognize the Church administrative body of Patriarch Tikhon which he desired to set up after the "Living Church" had usurped the Patriarch's chancery while he was in prison. He was under strict surveillance, unable either to move about freely or to publish anything not sanctioned by the Soviet authorities. In 1925 he died. His successor, Bishop Peter, was soon arrested and banished to Siberia. His successor, in turn, Bishop (and then Metropolitan) Sergius, adopted a policy of collaboration, within decent limits, with the Communist regime. Such a policy naturally proved wholly ineffective during the first phase of the Revolution, leading to a loss of prestige of the acting Patriarch among many groups of believers; to the formal repudiation of his authority by a number of the hierarchy, both in Russia and abroad; to the administrative separation of several Russian churches abroad from the existing Russian Patriarchy; and to similar results.

The unity of the Russian Church was thus finally broken. Its hierarchical structure was split up into a number of factions. For the time being, it had ceased to constitute a single *Corpus Mysticum*.

Every serious investigator of profound revolutions is aware that they destroy only those institutions, values and trends that were already moribund, while those that are fundamentally sound invariably survive the negative phase, in a purified and ennobled form. Their power, indeed, is so irresistible that the revolution is ultimately compelled to recognize and sanction them, even going so far as to pretend that, instead of having sought to oppose them, it has consistently endeavored to preserve and cherish them. This is precisely what has happened with many basic institutions and values during the postdestructive phase of the Russian revolution. Among them is the Russian religious system.

During the nineteen thirties a gradual, almost imperceptible change became evident in the field of the Russian Church and religion and in the policy of the government vis-à-vis these institutions. In the first place,



those who had retained their faith, as well as those newly converted from their erstwhile position as atheists, were animated by a religious ardor of singular intensity. Their religious sense transcended the comparatively low level of routine ritualism and inherited custom and soared to exalted heights, envisaging a union with God and His eternal values unblemished by any mundane motives. As such it became an utterly fearless and irresistible force, taking complete possession of the body and soul of the believer.

This transformation occurred in many different classes. The intelligentsia, hitherto perhaps more atheistic or agnostic than that of any other country, became more acutely religious-minded. University professors and representatives of other professions who had scarcely ever delivered a sermon prior to the Revolution now frequently felt impelled to preach to church congregations. The former agnostic or atheistic and hostile attitude toward religion largely disappeared. The cases of S. Bulgakoff and N. Berdyaev, professors of political economy at the University of Moscow, are typical. They were among the few intellectuals who constituted the first notable Russian Marxians and introduced Marxism into Russia. During the Revolution, Bulgakoff was ordained as a priest and became the head of the Russian Theological Institute in Paris; and Berdiaieff became an eminent religious thinker and philosopher. A similar religious transformation manifested itself among the peasantry and other classes, including even a section of the Communist party itself. An impartial observer who attended the church services during these years, if he had been familiar with the atmosphere prevalent before the Revolution, would have been amazed by the intensity of the religious fervor displayed by the congregation. A sensitive observer could not have failed to detect an atmosphere akin to that which probably prevailed in the early Christian catacombs—a spirit of unbounded religious aspiration, devotion and faith in God, and of willingness, if necessary, to die for one's faith.

In some this metamorphosis assumed the form of mysticism and gnosticism, in the truest sense of the terms. In the majority of cases it assumed the guise of devotion to the Russian Orthodox religion in a purified and highly spiritualized form. Some of the latter adhered to the ritual and other traditional ceremonials, regularly attending the church services and submitting to the administrative guidance of the Moscow Patriarchy, its acting head, and the other ecclesiastical authorities. Others, more concerned with inner, subjective values, regarded the ritual as something



secondary—as a means rather than an end—and hence tended somewhat to ignore the externals of the Orthodox faith. These distinctions are made in order to emphasize the fact that *the magnitude of the religious revival in question cannot be properly apprehended solely on the basis of attendance upon church services and of the official records of the number of believers.*

A similar renaissance made itself felt within the ranks of the priesthood and the hierarchy. The weaker personalities—those who were earning their livelihood as officials of the Church Department and were afraid of incurring disfranchisement and like penalties—were gradually weeded out during the fiery ordeal of the Revolution. Preferring to play safe by courting the favor of the ruling class, they forswore the priesthood and became “seculars,” loyally subservient to the Communist authorities. Only those who were true servants of God, putting their spiritual duties above all other considerations, remained within the ranks of the clergy. Purified and transfigured by the tragic ordeal through which they and their country had passed, they have measured up to the most exalted standards of religious and ethical leadership, and have thus gained added authority and prestige in the eyes of all the faithful whom they so devotedly and wholeheartedly serve. This process of revival of religiosity in its various forms is very modest, as yet, and far from being widely spread. Nevertheless it took place and is bound to grow.

Revitalized both within the ranks of the clergy and in the hearts of the people, religion naturally began to exert an ever-increasing influence upon the nation and the government. Firmly entrenched in power, and with the Church relegated exclusively to religious functions, the government eventually lost its hysterical paranoic disposition to detect on every hand evidences of sinister “counterrevolutionary” activities. This led to an abatement of its policy of persecution. Faced with the paramount task of social reconstruction, it came to perceive the need for actual co-operation with the Church. Coercive police measures, so effective for purposes of suppression, were discovered to be wholly inadequate for rebuilding the family; educating the masses; inculcating honesty, social-mindedness and altruism; developing the arts and sciences, economics and politics. Finally, when the imminence of war became apparent, and it was necessary to arouse a popular sense of loyalty, heroic courage and readiness for supreme sacrifice, the co-operation of the forces of religion became even more imperative. Although not many were prepared to fight and die for either Stalin or

the Communist party, the rank and file were willing, as always, to sacrifice themselves for the *fatherland* and its basic historical values. For a part of the population among these fundamental values were religion and the Church. As in previous crises, these institutions could be counted on to inculcate a spirit of loyalty, courage and sacrifice.

Under such circumstances the religious policy of the government was bound to be progressively transformed, manifesting first an attitude of increasing tolerance and then an open recognition of the positive values of the religious groups as a patriotic force. This included lavish praise for the services of such leaders as Prince ("Saint") Alexander Nevsky and the various patriarchs, bishops, abbots and priests who had helped to create Russia, and to organize resistance to the enemy in the darkest hours of foreign invasion.

This shift of policy reacted, in turn, upon the religious renaissance itself. With the decline of the Communist persecution, many who had been cowed by repression began to return to the fold of the Church. Many religious customs, including the observance of Christmas and Easter, were restored; Sunday and holy days were increasingly observed; and church attendance mounted, even among members of the Communist party. Atheistic propaganda abated and soon almost reached the vanishing point. At present its organizations are virtually disbanded, its publications have largely ceased to function, and it is surmised that it no longer derives any appreciable funds from the government treasury.

The invasion of the country by Hitler's legions gave an enormous impetus to this religious revival. Contrary to his expectations, the Nazi attack served merely to weld Russians of all factions and creeds into an indivisible unity—a single entity unconditionally resolved to fight for Russia's freedom and independence. No sooner was the first assault launched than the Church and its leaders called upon the citizenry to rally to the support of the fatherland. To this challenge the faithful responded without stint, contributing money and valuables, food, clothing and almost anything they possessed to the defense of the country. Parishioners and priests alike joined the armed forces, loyally co-operating with the government.

It would, of course, be incorrect to assume that the trend in question has already reached its culmination. The covert attitude of the Soviet authorities toward religion is probably still one of hostility, suspicion or, at least, indifference. Nevertheless, a minimum of religious freedom has

been achieved; and this will undoubtedly steadily increase, regardless of the ideology of the political regime. Meanwhile the government itself, impelled by the pressure of powerful historical forces, will inevitably assume an attitude of growing friendliness toward and co-operation with the various religious organizations of the nation.

To summarize. After the long prerevolutionary period of gradual decline, followed by the tragic disintegration incident to the first phase of the Revolution, the Russian religious system began rapidly to revive, purified, sublimated, ennobled and revitalized by the fiery ordeal of the crisis through which it had passed. It is now potentially as strong as that of any country—probably stronger than in many—possessing immense latent resources of faith and moral power.

In conclusion, it may be said that, all in all, the Russian religion and Church throughout the centuries have been virtually as democratic as any comparable religious system in the world. At the present time they are again becoming free, more and more exempt from control by the state and shorn of the last vestiges of the dead weight of bureaucracy.

*Editor's Note:* This article is to appear as a chapter in Doctor Sorokin's new book, *Russia and the United States*, which is scheduled for publication by E. P. Dutton and Company, January, 1944.

## Edward Gibbon's Five Causes

FREDERICK C. GRANT

ONE wonders if as many persons read Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* these days as formerly. I remember hearing references to it, in my youth, from more than one preacher; in fact, one beloved rector made annual reference to it, which always began with the words, "Upon rereading once more Gibbon's classic *History* . . . . I have been struck with its unfairness and superficiality in dealing with the spread of Christianity." Dear man, he told the truth—he *did* reread Gibbon each year, and he was, I believe, annually impressed with that author's deficiencies! But this was mildness in criticism. The bitter complaints of other preachers about Gibbon's "skepticism," or his "subtle infidelity," or his purposeful effort to "undermine" the Christian faith—all this was set forth in vigorous tones, and with an obvious air of resentment. But it reflected, I believe, much more concern over the influence of Gibbon's reputed "skepticism" upon those who had heard of his doubts about the miracles (for example), than it did the preacher's personal disappointment with Gibbon as a historian. For five generations the subject was a vexed and thorny one—and it was still a commonplace in the pulpit a generation ago. But why not now? Have people stopped reading Gibbon? Or has worse skepticism arisen to obscure his fame as a "doubter"? Or has the whole controversy over his explanation of the rise of Christianity lost interest, as couched in too antique and old-fashioned a phraseology or pattern of thought?

It is now a hundred and fifty years since the immortal author of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* laid down his ever-industrious pen. Returning from Lausanne to London early in June, 1793, he died in that city on the 16th of the following January. It was the summer that saw Boswell's second edition of *The Life of Samuel Johnson*—the "Advertisement" was dated July 1—and he died before the third could be prepared for printing. Edward Gibbon and Samuel Johnson were contemporaries: "There were giants in those days." The very different outlooks of these two men, upon life and letters, upon politics and history, and upon religion, embrace between them much of the best in English thought during their time. Their marked divergence in religion is typical of their era. Johnson the "great and good," the devout, the charitable,

the man of rugged earnestness and piety, so devout that in discussing even the tawdry subject of drunkenness he could remark, "A man accustomed to self-examination will be conscious when he is drunk, though an habitual drunkard will not be conscious of it"—that is one type. Gibbon the suave, the skeptical, the sinister, at least as understood by a century of his critics, equally as precocious as Johnson in his youth and equally learned in maturity and age—here was another type. Both of them reflect the religious milieu of the Establishment, though each reacted in a different way. Johnson discovered Law's *Serious Call*, and it in turn found him where he lived. Gibbon, alas, made no such discovery. The poignant passage in his *Memoirs* which introduces the account and defense of his brief career in the Church of Rome goes a long way to explain his skepticism, and throws back some of the responsibility where it justly belongs.

"According to the statutes of the university, every student, before he is matriculated, must subscribe his assent to the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, which are signed by more than read, and read by more than believe them. My insufficient age excused me, however, from the immediate performance of this legal ceremony, and the vice-chancellor directed me to return as soon as I should have accomplished my fifteenth year; recommending me, in the meanwhile, to the instruction of my college. My college forgot to instruct; I forgot to return, and was myself forgotten by the first magistrate of the university. Without a single lecture, either public or private, either Christian or Protestant, without any academical subscription, without any Episcopal confirmation, I was left, by the dim light of my Catechism, to grope my way to the chapel and communion table, where I was admitted, without a question how far, or by what means, I might be qualified to receive the sacrament. Such almost incredible neglect was productive of the worst mischiefs."

It is only fair to keep in mind this passage as we review the "Causes" by which Gibbon undertook to explain the rise of Christianity in his famous Fifteenth Chapter. The skepticism with which he has been credited for the past century and a half reflects not only the spirit of the man himself, and of his times and his circle, but also the failure of religious education in his youth.

It is interesting to review these five Causes, after this long lapse of time during which, for good or ill, Gibbon's classic *History* has influenced all readers of English prose, irritating the conservative, and setting the advocates of orthodoxy on a continual defensive. Dean Milman observed, upon the opening of this chapter, "Divest the whole passage of the latent sarcasm betrayed by the subsequent tone of the whole disquisition, and it might commence a Christian history written in the most Christian spirit



of candor." Indeed, the author acknowledges at the outset that "an obvious but satisfactory" explanation of the triumph of Christianity may be found in "the convincing evidence of the doctrine itself" and in "the ruling providence of its great Author." The five Causes are accordingly instrumental, as the means used by Providence to achieve His ends: "As truth and reason seldom find so favorable a reception in the world [as to attain their end directly], and as the wisdom of Providence frequently condescends to use the passions of the human heart and the general circumstances of mankind as instruments to execute its purpose, we may still be permitted, though with becoming submission, to ask, not indeed what were the first, but what were the secondary causes of the rapid growth of the Christian Church."

The five Causes are thus safeguarded, theologically, fully in advance of their presentation. One cannot help wondering if every critic of Gibbon, during these hundred and fifty years, has pondered carefully this preamble to their announcement! Whether this be so or not, they follow at once in this order:

"I. The inflexible (and, if we may use the expression, the intolerant) zeal of the Christians, derived, it is true, from the Jewish religion, but purified from the narrow and unsocial spirit which, instead of inviting, had deterred the Gentiles from embracing the law of Moses. II. The doctrine of a future life, improved by every additional circumstance which could give weight and efficacy to that important truth. III. The miraculous powers ascribed to the primitive Church. IV. The pure and austere morals of the Christians. V. The union and discipline of the Christian republic, which gradually formed an independent and increasing state in the heart of the Roman Empire."

1. Gibbon begins with the least probable of his explanatory Causes, "the inflexible (and, if we may use the expression, the intolerant) zeal of the Christians"—a zeal only less intolerant than that of the Jews from which it was derived. The research of a hundred and fifty years has only served to deepen the conviction of historical specialists that primitive Christianity owed a vast and irreparable debt to Judaism. The very form of organization of the early Church carried on the pattern, under modification, of the synagogue of the Dispersion; the earliest liturgies were basically Jewish—scratch the surface of the early Christian prayers and they betray a Jewish substratum. Even the ordination prayers, the earliest of them, claim Moses and the Elders as prototypes of the Christian presbyter and bishop. The earliest Christian Bible was the Greek translation of the Old Testament which the Church inherited from the Synagogue—



the so-called Septuagint or "Version of the Seventy." It is something more than "zeal," then. As no one has made clearer than Harnack, though his researches are amply confirmed by those of other scholars, the early Church took over a field already plowed, harrowed and seeded with the Word of God by several generations of Jewish piety and propaganda throughout the length and breadth of the Mediterranean world. Deissmann's great map (appended to his *Paulus*), showing in one color the location of Jewish communities outside Palestine and in another color the centers of early Christianity, is quite conclusive. Christianity was the heir of Jewish missionary zeal in all quarters of the Gentile world. Gibbon's first Cause is still sound, then; except that, we should formulate it, today, in more adequate and in less offensive terms.

2. "The doctrine of a future life"—the second Cause is equally cogent. Throughout the civilized world ran a deep undercurrent, as Wendland described it, of religious aspiration and yearning for a life to come. True, the old gods were shadowy, vanishing figures from the long ago; there had taken place what Gilbert Murray called "the failure of nerve" on the part of their devotees and protagonists. But that was not the end of the story. New gods, new cults, new ideas in philosophy, new aspirations in religion were widespread. The mystery cults sweeping westward from the perennially fruitful East gave satisfaction to those who craved tangible evidence or assurance of rebirth, salvation and immortality. So true was this that it produced a proverb, *Ex oriente lux*: Light breaks in the east! Professor Nock, in his study of *Conversion: the Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo*, has recounted the stages by which this higher satisfaction of man's endless quest for life and immortality came about. The devotee of Mithras was "reborn for eternity by the mystic bath of bull's blood": *renatus in aeternum taurobolio*. The votary of Isis, or of Serapis, was "one with God forever," and could say, "I am thou, for thou art I." Puerile as some of their conceptions undoubtedly were, the mysteries brought home to men the certainty of a divine satisfaction, somewhere, somehow, of man's inner restlessness and misery, a cure for his habitual homelessness in the universe. What the mysteries undertook to provide, but provided only in part, was completely provided only by Christ who—as the New Testament affirms—"brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

Gibbon was not fully aware of all this, of course. The modern

archeological and literary research into the mystery religions dates only from the latter half of the nineteenth century. But the discovery of their vast extent and strong hold upon the religious life of men throughout the Roman Empire confirms the statement of Gibbon. The highest utterance about Christ the New Testament contains, as many would say, is the verse: "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." Many another besides the author of the Fourth Gospel, in that age long ago, no doubt made the same affirmation, and held to the same appraisal.

3. "The miraculous powers ascribed to the primitive Church." Miracles, it is now a commonplace to remark, are more a burden than a support to faith. But it was not ever thus. The early centuries were replete with "supernaturalism," as Dean Case and many others have demonstrated. Pagan miracles were even more common than Christian. It was the *quality* of the miracle, the person disclosed as the real Author of the supernormal occurrence, the purpose of God revealed in the event—that is what distinguished a miracle, not its bare or raw miraculousness. By the same token, miracles did not weigh so heavily then as they would now—there was no natural order to be "contravened," save in the minds of a few pioneer scientists—and they too found a place in their systems for portents and "unexplained phenomena." Certainly miracles had their value, chiefly evidential, and useful in Christian propaganda. And they lasted a long while: Irenaeus, at the end of the second century, knew of persons who had been raised from the dead. But so do we—by insulin. It is not the sheer supernatural that convinces, that converts men and makes saints of sinners; plenty of supernatural phenomena are purely horrific, diabolical, unnerving. It is the quality of the purpose revealed—through miracle, in a miracle-loving age; through natural law, medicine, surgery, education, in a scientific age—that is what makes the difference. As the late Baron von Hügel insisted, the truest, highest manifestation of the supernatural is not in physical "miracles" but is the life in grace, the growth of sanctity, the "life hid with Christ in God." So it is still; and so also it was once, when the gospel first set forth upon its career of spiritual world-conquest.

Gibbon misses all this—he is the child of his own times. The German Aufklärung, French Rationalism, English Deism had hid all this from his eyes. Men had other theories, those days, of "the miraculous" and its function in the origin and spread of "religious ideas." Religions arose through credulity—and fear. Priestcraft had seized upon the super-

naturalism common to primitive thought, and had preserved and nourished it, as a means of keeping the masses in subjection. Popular those days, at least in "enlightened circles," was the saying of Petronius as quoted by Statius, *il dolce poeta*, "In the beginning fear created the gods": *Primus in orbe deos fecit timor*. The French dramatist de Crébillon had quoted it in his *Xercès* (1749): "Fear created the gods, audacity created kings." But there is more to be said than that. Rudolf Otto has come between Gibbon's days and ours. The deepest root of religion is, indeed, the numinous—but the marvel is that religion turns out to be, not credulity, not superstition, but the mother of the arts, of science, and of rationality.

4. "The pure and austere morals of the Christians." Here likewise Gibbon recognized a fact, which the early Apologists were not slow to recognize and emphasize in their polemic against paganism. One of the finest pictures of Christian morality is in Aristides' *Apology*:

"The Christians know and trust God, the Creator of heaven and earth, in whom are all things and from whom are all things, and who hath no other God beside him. From him they have received the commandments which they have engraved on their minds and keep in the hope and expectation of the world to come. . . . If any of them have slaves, they persuade them to become Christians for the love they have to them; and when they become so they call them without distinction brothers. They do not worship strange gods. They walk in all humility and kindness, and falsehood is not found among them. They love one another. They do not refuse to help the widows. They rescue the orphan from violence. He who has gives ungrudgingly to him who lacks. If they see a stranger, they take him home and entertain him as a brother. . . . When one of their poor passes from this world, any one of them who sees it provides for his burial according to his ability. And if they hear that any one of their number is in prison or oppressed for the name of their Messiah, all of them provide for his needs. . . . Thus they labor to become righteous, as those who expect to see their Messiah and to receive from him the glorious fulfillment of the promises made to them. Truly this is a new people, and there is something divine in them!"

As Professor Glover has put it in an epigram, "The Christian out-thought, outlived, and outdied the pagan." The age from Augustus to the Antonines, or even to Constantine, was not irreligious, but the contrary; and it recognized in Christianity a power at work in the world for transforming human life and making it better. It was no accident that Tertullian was able to say: "We are but of yesterday, and we have filled your cities, your islands, your stations, your country towns and settlements, your council chambers, your very camp, your palace, your Senate, your bar. We have left you only your temples. We can count your armies: the Christians of a single province exceed them in number."

5. "The union and discipline of the Christian republic, which gradually formed an independent and increasing state in the heart of the Roman Empire." So it was in the days before Diocletian, according to the church historian Eusebius; during the "long peace" under Gallienus, Christianity had become so sure of itself that it could even rest upon its laurels, with the rude consequences that befell when persecution was renewed once more under the cruel Dalmatian, last and fiercest of the pagan persecutors. But despite all criticisms that may properly be made—the neo-Caesarism of Constantine, his complete utilitarianism, and the fatal identification of Christianity with civilized society that followed the peace of the Church—despite all this, it is clear that when later the outward fabric of political society collapsed, under the stress of barbarian invasion, it was the Catholic Church which survived, took over, and maintained what law and order, education, culture and civilization in general survived during the Dark Ages.

I disagree with those who accuse Gibbon of total skepticism, rationalism and historical obtuseness. His faults are not perversion or misrepresentation, but rather lack of sympathy, lack of depth, and a certain superficiality which was partly the fault of his times. Partly, too, it was the misfortune of writing before rather than after the century and a half of historical research that has succeeded him—toward which enterprise he himself contributed no small share of capital—and partly it is the fault of the ecclesiastical system under which he was reared, with its neglect of religious instruction and its characteristic suspicion of religious zeal. "Preach the gospel, and put down Enthusiasm" was the charge of an eighteenth-century English bishop to his ordinands!

For to understand Christianity, even to *understand* it, one must have a genuine sympathy with what it aims to do; not a comprehension of its doctrines or dogmas; not an appreciation of its sublimities or its ordinary beauties of aspiration, even; but a heart-warming enthusiasm for what it is doing in the world, and for the One who has ever been its inspiration, the master-light of all its seeing.

Christianity has often been represented as a system of ideas, or a code of conduct, or a social philosophy, or a theological "scheme of salvation." It is all these, more or less, it is true. But the many-splendored thing that shines at its heart is a new way of life for man upon this earth, in union with God and in sympathy with all men everywhere. In brief, like the parent religion, Judaism, it is essentially no system of ideas but

a kind of piety, a way of life. And to miss that is to miss the one thing necessary to an understanding of what it is and does.

As for the secondary causes, yes; Gibbon is not wrong, and his cordial reviewers and editors were justified—even William Smith, who described the *History* as "the greatest historical production, whether in ancient or in modern literature"; or Niebuhr—"Gibbon's work will never be excelled." But the famous Causes need restatement, and supplementing. They carry us part of the way toward a historical understanding of the Christian religion. But one thing they lack, namely depth. And one thing alone can supply that, in the study of any religion whatsoever: it is personal conviction, faith, inner experience of its total reality.

Someone has said that no man can write the history of a religion who has not himself believed it, and then given it up. Even upon this basis, Gibbon did not qualify—he never gave up the Christian religion, for it is doubtful if he ever really believed it. But it is not enough merely to disqualify or deride the author of the *Decline and Fall*; here is a warning for all generations and for every Christian church. The neglect of religious instruction, even in one individual, may have consequences that last for centuries and affect the life and thought of millions yet unborn!



# Toward a Wartime Philosophy

C. CHARLES BURLINGAME

**T**ODAY in the greatest war we have ever known we are watching the spectacle of a whole world in transition. Old beliefs, ideals and desires are undergoing revolutionary and complete change.

Although some will say that with the war not yet won it is too early for postwar planning, nevertheless there is a type of postwar thinking which must be done now. A period of indecision and social wobbling at this point may be catastrophic later.

Within a relatively short time we have deliberately and skillfully converted the emotional drives of a whole nation from peace to war. Making use of all the highly developed means of communication at our disposal—radio, press and moving pictures—and at an enormous financial outlay, we have converted the nation from peacetime to wartime emotional drives.

Everyone has been, or is being, indoctrinated with war and its destructive goals. The industrial worker of today is not the industrial worker of former wars. He has been shifted from the manufacture of typewriters to the manufacture of guns but, more important still, his emotional drives have been completely shifted so that he no longer takes pride in the making of a good typewriter or an adding machine. His emotional drives are satisfied only when his work is on bomb sights or machine guns or some other vital war material.

Similarly, the farmer no longer cultivates his land merely for a livelihood. Instead, he has been taught that he is farming for victory and everything he raises is indirectly a threat to the German or Japanese foe.

This is indicative of the transition in our emotional drives which is so necessary for winning the war. It is the sudden and ruthless change which strips from man his veneer of civilization and reveals underneath the sadistic traits of the more primitive man residing in all of us.

With this so-called "total war" there has come an appreciation of the importance of man's emotional drives and his potency through the direction of his urges and will to do. We recognize that training alone, equipment alone and financial reward alone do not produce the best fighting man, nor the best war worker, nor the most patriotic civilian. Most urgently needed are his fanatical zeal, his emotional drive, and his



will to do and urge to accomplish, in order to fully activate his training and all of his physical resources.

For these emotional drives in the direction of war, these emotional urges in the direction of destruction, make a tremendously powerful force all going in one direction. This force must be promptly, skillfully, completely and forcibly redirected toward peacetime living after the war or else our social problems, including nervous and mental disease, will make those with which we had to cope after the last war seem comparatively insignificant.

The creating of employment and the providing of food and clothing and social opportunity will be secondary to reindoctrinating for peacetime goals. *Redirecting emotional urges to peacetime pursuits will be the major problem, not creating jobs alone.*

We will have to reindoctrinate people from war to peace just as we have indoctrinated them from their peaceful lives to war. This problem of reindoctrination includes not only the armed forces, but the war worker, the farmer, the housewife and the school child; in fact, the entire civilian population. All must have their emotional drives, their "will-to-do" redirected once more to peacetime aims. Not only must they have jobs and a place in the scheme of things, but the same powerful machinery which transformed their emotional urges from peacetime pursuits into war aims must be put "in reverse" with even greater skill than has yet been demonstrated.

Our failure to redirect the emotional drives of our returning soldiers following the last war cost us thousands of mental casualties which, in turn, cost us billions of dollars and immeasurable national suffering. We have never completely recovered our mental equilibrium since the last war and, as a result, we have been a psychologically sick nation in the intervening twenty-five years between wars. After the last war, we made a modest but ineffectual effort to assimilate our returning warriors into society again. But we failed, at least in part, because we lacked a real understanding of the nature of the problem. We neglected to redirect the emotional drives.

There is no easy way to solve this problem. We cannot simply tell people to take up peacetime skills after they have mastered warlike ones, and expect them to obey. The road back to the ploughshare from the sword is harder than the road to the swords. After the last war, we had at least one great advantage. We were returning to an established

order which did not differ materially from the one we had left. Yet we failed, then, in our duty of reindoctrination.

After this war, it will be even more difficult than before because we will move into a new social order whose complexion no man, prophet or politician, knows at the present moment. And the readjustment will be tremendous.

The solution to this problem of reindoctrination and of substituting new and vastly different emotional drives lies, I believe, in the building up of a new state of mind throughout the nation. We must place the emphasis on preventive psychology, and on averting catastrophe, rather than on the building of bigger and better hospitals to care for increasing numbers of mental casualties.

The importance of the state of mind, of the individual or the nation, can hardly be overemphasized. We have seen it again and again during this war. Why do some armies, which are poorly equipped, ill-fed and vastly outnumbered, fight on and win eventual victory under conditions which by all military logic, spell certain defeat? Why do other armies, superior in number and power and equipment, crumble at the first attack? What made Eddie Rickenbacker and his companions able to survive their Pacific ordeal when other younger and stronger men have died under similar conditions? It was a matter of morale or a state of mind, since the two are synonymous. But because a state of mind is invisible and impalpable and cannot be weighed or counted, it may be overlooked or underestimated in a program of postwar planning. And yet to me it is the most important factor in the successful rehabilitation of this nation.

The building up of a state of mind is a task for which we psychiatrists should be particularly fitted by our training and experience. We should be able to play our part in understanding and molding the mass mind, by maintaining an objective attitude which will aid us to comprehend and evaluate the psychological changes which are taking place in men.

I am not suggesting that this is the job of the psychiatrist alone. Psychiatrists must not undertake to play Superman. They must, instead, lose themselves in the task ahead, working side by side with all those who are pushing forward. We can make our greatest contribution humbly and anonymously. In order to ward off the mental ills which are bound to attack men at the war's end, it will require the united efforts of industry, education, art, science and religion, working together, earnestly and humbly, for a common end. In fact, it does not matter *who* assumes

the leadership in this great new work of reindoctrination. The important question is that the work be *done*, preferably through the joint efforts of all sections of society. And just as our great educational system, our radio, press and public education have been concentrated on the indoctrination for war, so with religion and medicine, they will have to operate on an equally magnificent scale in order to accomplish the reindoctrination for peace.

Old theoretical viewpoints which we have gathered from textbooks on psychiatry and economics and politics are no longer of much help. By the end of the war most of them will be due for replacement. We have seen how quickly our great airplane manufacturers have allowed for fluidity in design for their ships. There is every indication that a similar fluidity and purposefulness is needed now in the field of postwar planning, in order to cope successfully with the new problems which will inevitably arise. Any thought of reindoctrinating for our postwar world must certainly take into consideration the underlying meaning of the slogans which have been made the battle cry to summon the emotional urges and drives of the whole nation. Most prominent among these is the "American Way of Life."

But what is this American way of life? Certainly, it is not bigger and better gadgets, nor is it a chicken in every pot, two cars in every garage, a refrigerator in every home. It is not even the elimination of poverty or the better distribution of wealth. The American way of life started when our forefathers forsook materialistic things and came to the shores of this country to suffer privations greater than were ever known to the serfs of Europe. It has a spiritual quality which is difficult to define. It would take a wiser and braver person than I to attempt to define exactly what this American way of life is.

But we all know that we must as individuals and as a nation find an almost lost quality which will become the incentive and the driving force to give us endurance in rebuilding our mental and emotional lives at the end of this struggle.

With great temerity, I suggest that the American way of life is, primarily, our right to be growing, constructive, social human beings and, only secondly, possessors of gadgets and machines and material wealth. The four freedoms—freedom from want, freedom from fear, freedom of speech and freedom of religious belief, might well be encompassed as a by-product of the American way of life. All material things must be merely

the by-product of this American way of life and certainly not the most worthy things for which to fight.

Today in the midst of war, we are being promised, after the war, incredible numbers of chickens and cars and shoes, and gadgets which are a combination helicopter-automobile-electric stove. In this time of comparative deprivation—which, incidentally, would have seemed like comparative luxury to our sturdy forefathers—we are being steadied in the struggle and spurred on in the fight by the reminder that when it is over everything will be superperfect. We who were living in luxury and ease before will be smothered in luxury after the war. We must uproot this false philosophy which has come so perilously close to destroying us. If all we are to win out of the tremendous tragedy of war is a greater covetousness and a larger lustfulness for our own comfort and pleasure, then why the struggle? I cannot believe that the new spirit of real strength which has been shown lately in the willingness to die by our fighting men and the willingness to sacrifice and suffer by our civilians will disappear when the struggle is over. For the essence of life is struggle.

When the fight goes out of a man or a nation, then decadence sets in and the end is in sight. That is why the numerous altruistic panaceas for all of life's evils are basically unsound. That overwhelming benevolence which would offer us security and freedom from care in every step of our lives from infancy to senility, either through government or group action, is patently absurd. For although today, at least in time of peace, we in this nation have largely won freedom from starvation, we cannot and should not have complete freedom from want. It is our nature to crave what we do not have. If all of our desires were removed, it would take all the fun out of living, it would take all the venturesomeness, the gay courage and high adventure out of youth and all the imagination and hopeful planning out of maturity. It would substitute the barren plateau of security for the soaring peaks of adventure. Fortunately for us as individuals and as a nation it cannot reasonably be done.

Before this war we were a big nation, growing bigger. Our country was self-sufficient, all-powerful, unafraid. We were growing big but we were not growing great, because we had never investigated the elements of greatness. We had traveled far on the roadways of science, and had discovered many things; but we had not troubled to rediscover the simple, fundamental things about ourselves which would give us mastery, first, over ourselves, then over science. There is no more ironic spectacle than

that of modern man, who has penetrated so deeply into the mysteries of science that he has recreated a magic world which can supply healing and nourishment and pleasure to millions, and yet he has progressed so little in the understanding of his own nature that he is feverishly forcing all his discoveries to accomplish his own destruction. And why? Because in this mechanistic age, our society has tried to do the impossible; to train man for what he cannot be. Forgetting the instinctive needs and original purposes of man, society has tried to fit him into the pattern of the machine, to make him what he is not.

Psychiatrists, above all people, know that any man with an intelligence level above that of a moron's needs to feel essential. He wants to be "in" things, he wants to feel needed, however small the field of his usefulness. Yet how can a man feel useful or needed today when his work has become a mere fractional unit in the machinery of mass production? The man in a large manufacturing plant who endlessly repeats the same perfunctory operation *ad infinitum* without any understanding of what he is doing, or what relationship it has to the finished work, how can this man feel necessary? The old pride in craftsmanship is lost. His identity has become merged into the great impersonality of the machine.

As a result, he is apt to find himself mentally groping, asking himself, "where do I go from here?" And when the war is over, and the immediate urgency of victory can no longer be offered as a goal, he is very apt to find that the answer to "where do I go from here?" is simply, "to pieces." And thousands like him, suffering from a growing disadjustment from reality, may cause a consequent sharp upswing in the number of cases of mental illness and nervous disorder, with an increased population in our already overcrowded mental hospitals.

Recent studies indicate that approximately sixteen per cent of the men who are candidates for our armed forces have some form of nervous or mental disease or maladjustment. This is a staggeringly high figure and a crushing indictment not only of psychiatrists and other members of the medical profession, but of society as a whole. It seems as if something fundamental and all-important had gone out of our lives to cause such a mass malformation among the young.

Man is essentially a creative animal with spiritual and creative urges of such vast proportions that he is set aside from all other animal life. He must not only create to attain a full life, but in order to endure himself, he must feel that he is an integral part of the creative effort of



his time. It is tragic to think that the best creative efforts of the majority of men today are all directed to the destructive goal of war. This is so because it requires the highest accomplishments of the finest minds working together tirelessly, to win victory.

Today we have an unparalleled opportunity to get back to first causes and seek again ultimate goals more worthy of man. War, the universal scourge of mankind, has at least one beneficent effect—it thrusts us back to the rugged truths of nature and to a reconsideration of the elemental and spiritual needs which we tend in times of prosperity to forget. Can man stand prosperity as well as adversity? History has proven that in the crucible of suffering, he rediscovers his own spiritual values.

War, which every thinking man deplors and which is certainly one of the most unintelligent products of human energy, now that it is upon us, is an opportunity, drastic and bitter, to find once more the spiritual goals without which our individual and even our national existence lacks enduring purpose.

Somehow and somewhere our nebulous feelings which seemed to justify the war as a bitter struggle between the "haves and have-nots" soon gave way to the battle cry of the aggressors against the rightful owners. Now, through various steps, this has given way to a definite feeling that we are fighting *for* something, rather than *against* something. But we still find it difficult to define what that thing is for which we are fighting; we still find it difficult, if not impossible, to translate this feeling into mere words because it relates to those spiritual values which exist within man and are urging him to relationships and unfolding before him values which cannot be measured and cannot be described in the materialistic sense.

As a student of medicine and psychiatric values, I have come to realize that only the thoughtless or uninformed, the unwise or the unreasonably conceited psychiatrist would feel that man could, in the future, exist, or even endure himself, to say nothing about moving forward, without religion. Religion is indispensable and indestructible. As witness the fact that the Orthodox Church is being re-established in the great Soviet Union. It is religious leaders to whom we thus look for a crystallizing and an interpreting of these spiritual values which we may have lost but which at the conclusion of this war, we must find again if the very economic structures are to survive. It is imperative that we accept the leadership of the Church in the world of tomorrow if there is to be any real brotherhood of man.

# Love

CLARENCE TUCKER CRAIG

**H**ENRY DRUMMOND called it "The Greatest Thing in the World"; Toyohiko Kagawa describes it as "The Law of Life"; but the actions of men on the contemporary scene provide a sharp denial of any such supremacy of "love." With a whole planet locked in internecine struggle, the modern man is tempted to feel that love is a romantic luxury in a world where grim conflict is the real law of life. If Tolstoy is right in the title of his story, "Where Love Is There God Is," it is no wonder that many find it difficult to believe in God.

Of course, all men recognize that there are spheres where "love" has its rightful place. There are friends and relatives of whom we are genuinely fond. We are drawn to some by bonds of selective sentiment, and we are repelled by others whom we just as positively dislike. The ties of friendship and affection bind together families and groups and create intense, though narrow, loyalties. But this natural emotion is not confined to any particular religion nor is it what Christians mean when they speak of "love." In fact, Jesus called men and women to a loyalty which must transcend attachment even to the closest friend. Anyone who loved father or mother, son or daughter, more than Him was not worthy of Him.

All men likewise recognize the place of "love" as sexual attraction for one's mate. There are novelists of the naturalistic school who seem to use the word in hardly any other sense. Here is a biological impulse which is neither weakened nor strengthened by religious faith, though religion and sex do stand very close together. Religion calls for the ethical control of this impulse, so that it may contribute to the flowering rather than the debasing of life. Sex is not sinful, but part of the divine creation. Sin lies in impure lust and unsocial sexual expressions. Against these the Christian faith has waged incessant opposition. The destructive nature of sex conflicts in the life of an individual is not a modern discovery by Freud and his disciples. Long ago Jesus laid the emphasis on the fact that purity of life must root in purity of heart.

When Christians exalt love, they are referring neither to natural sentiment nor sexual desire. These have their value, yet they may be

very possessive and divisive. The love of which the New Testament speaks is self-giving and hence uniting. The vocabulary of the Bible is instructive at this point. The Greek word *eros*, from which "erotic" is derived, is nowhere found in the New Testament. Its use, particularly in Plato, might be noble: the love of the good, the true and beautiful. But this desire to possess for oneself the adorable object of devotion was not what the early Christians meant by love. Likewise when Latin became the language of the Church, *amor* was not the word which was used; it was usually *caritas*. The difference between "amorous" and "charity" suggests something of the contrast. Christian love sought to lift up the object of that love irrespective of its present value.

The New Testament writers did not confine themselves to one word. Frequently they employed the root from which our word "philanthropy" comes; that is the "love of men," not simply "alms-giving." Often we meet with *philadelphia*, "love of the brethren." But the favorite word was *agape*. This word was not coined anew by the Christian Church but it had been an infrequent term and was on the whole rather colorless. Into it was poured all of the new emphasis which characterized the gospel so that it is fitting to speak of *agape* as the central Christian motif. Christianity is a religion of love, not because Christians always have been loving; unfortunately history cannot support this. Christianity is a religion of love because its revelation of God centers in an act of love for men.

The greatest interpreter of the early Christian faith put this truth in these words: "God shows His love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. . . . I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. . . . For the love of Christ controls us." Another New Testament writer expressed it thus: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes on him might not perish but have eternal life. . . . And this is love, not that we love God, but that he loved us and gave his Son." Here is the explanation of the centrality of love in the Christian faith. It originated in an historic act of God for men, even for unworthy men. It was not that they deserved such gracious treatment for they did not. But the free act of God, motivated by the demands of His own character, had led to the revelation of His self-giving love for them.

The love of God is not primarily a deduction from the world of nature in the New Testament, but an affirmation of faith based on an event in history. Hence, our study of love must begin with Jesus.

In the gospel tradition the word "love" is not prominent by any statistical standard. It is clear that the religious vocabulary employed by Jesus was not characterized by sticky sentimentality. He did not ask people to become emotionally attached to Himself. He demanded sacrificial obedience to the cause to which He was devoted. To love Him was not merely to "like" Him but to live for the things for which Jesus Himself had lived and died.

But was Jesus a model of love such as many New Testament writers assert? Did He not drive the money-changers and the sellers of sacrificial animals out of the Temple? Did He not attack in the strongest language the hypocrisy of some of the Pharisees? To answer these questions will help to clarify the Christian conception of love. It is not first of all an emotional attitude, but an activity of good will motivated by inner sincerity. It was because of the intensity of His love that He could not permit the corruption of religion to go unchallenged and unrebuked. Yet the Temple hierarchy and the scribes were certainly included when Jesus burst out in disappointment: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not!"

The love of Jesus was not in word but in deed. It manifested a concern for men's *physical welfare*. As one reads through the earliest Gospel, Mark, one is impressed with the frequency of accounts of His ministering to the sick in body and mind. The blind and the paralyzed, the lepers and the epileptics, and especially those suffering from what they called demon possession felt His healing touch. Tradition says that when the multitude which followed Him were without food, He supplied their need. Meeting these elementary needs of men was what love meant to Him. The only time He described the final judgment, the criterion of acceptance and rejection was that of feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and sheltering the homeless. The evidence of the power of God in their midst was to be found in these expressions of love.

But man has other needs beyond the supplying of his physical wants. Even more distinctive in the career of Jesus was His *spiritual ministry* to the social and religious outcasts. The society of Palestine, dominated by the religious rigorists, despised those who from ignorance, or poverty or neglect failed to obey their Torah or law. These included dishonest tax-gatherers and prostitutes, but they also included many whose "sins"

were chiefly the infraction of ritual duties. Jesus did not isolate Himself from them for fear of contamination in the sight of God. He sought them out in love and reconciliation, mediating to them the divine forgiveness. When He said, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," new hope and confidence came to multitudes from whom the mercy of God had been hid. If the pious did not rejoice that these "lost sheep of the house of Israel" were being recovered, they were bringing themselves under the judgment of the God whose love Jesus showed forth.

The chief words which Jesus *spoke* about love lay in *extending the sphere of application*. In conversation with a scribe, Jesus summarized the whole law in terms of two commandments, to love God and to love one's neighbor. According to one tradition, the scribe joined these two commandments and Jesus assented to their primacy; according to the other, it was Jesus who offered this summary of the law and the scribe concurred. In any case, there was no dispute over the supremacy of love. It should be noted that elsewhere when Jesus was not quoting from the Old Testament, He did not talk about men and women "loving" God. Possibly that seemed to put God and man too much on the same plane. He preferred to speak of God as the object of man's *faith* and trust. Man is not to approach God with sentimental emotion, but with obedient trust. The point on which the discussion arose, however, was not concerning man's relation to God. It concerned man's relation to man. Who is my neighbor?

The answer of Jesus was clear. My neighbor is anyone in need. His own life was a demonstration. Though He Himself was convinced that His ministry should be for His own people, He did not turn away from the supplication of a Gentile. His teaching is set forth in an immortal story told to the scribe who posed this question. A certain man was robbed and beaten while traveling on the road between Jerusalem and Jericho. Two official representatives of religion, a priest and a levite, passed by without even a gesture of humanity. It was a despised foreigner, a Samaritan and a layman, who bound up the poor man's wounds, took him to an inn, and paid for his care. It has often been pointed out that the story really gives an illustration of how to be a neighbor. That is only part of the truth. The one man who is not identified in the story is the man who fell among thieves. Was he black or red or white? Was he deserving or a ne'er-do-well? Was he rich or poor? It is no accident that we are not told any of these things for it made no



difference. Here was a man in need; therefore he was the neighbor who should receive love.

This illustrates again that Christian love is not a sentimental emotion, but an ethical imperative. It is not a general feeling of universal benevolence, but specific good will toward those in need. Doubtless it is true that an emotion cannot be commanded; but Christian love is an ethical duty. It does not ask if men are worthy of affection, nor even what their possibilities are. Men are to be loved, not because they are equally divine, as Stoicism held, but because God loves them equally. Christian love asks only about their need, and seeks to meet that need. It says, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Some have found in these words a commendation of self-love. That is, however, a complete misunderstanding of Jesus. Self-love is not an ethical duty, but belongs to the natural egotism of humanity. Jesus called upon men to *deny* themselves, not to love themselves. Yet, because of the natural egotism of the self-centered individual, everyone knows what it is to love oneself. It is to seek your own advantage. Jesus called upon men to love their neighbor in that way: to seek their good. Self-love did not call for commendation nor for extension. But it did provide an illustration known to all from which they could understand better how they should love their neighbors.

The obligation to love is extended far beyond those whom we like; it is not confined to those of our own nationality, race or creed. It reaches the last one in need of our help. But many of these are not friendly to me. Does not that excuse me from any obligation to love them? Not in the eyes of Jesus. Even the irreligious love those who love them. He called upon His disciples to do more than others. That meant to love even their enemies and to pray for their persecutors. Even bitter hostility cannot put men outside the circle of love. Here is the climax of the life of love and the ultimate test of its completeness. To love enemies is not to appease them, but to do good to them, to bless them and not curse, to pray for them. When there is any individual for whom we cannot sincerely pray, we have fallen out of love.

Jesus did not exhort men to love their enemies with the promise that this was a more clever way of triumphing over them than by the use of force. Love may win them, but there is no guarantee in a world where a certain freedom remains which makes the future incalculable. Though Jesus Himself loved to the uttermost that did not win Judas,

nor did it stop the opposition of high priests and Pilate. A follower of Jesus urged that we should seek to overcome evil with good; but there is no guarantee that love will succeed in winning enemies. It is the only possible way to overcome the enmity, though in any individual case it may fail year after year. What Jesus promised was that by loving our enemies we would be like God, who makes His sun rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. God's love began while men were still hostile. The love of men must also go out even to those who hate and revile and persecute us.

It is not strange then that the early Christians looked upon Jesus as the model of love. "Walk in love, as Christ loved us. . . . By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us." It is this example of complete self-giving which takes love out of the realm of a theological abstraction and makes it pulsating with vitality. But we must also develop three particular aspects of love which are stressed in the biblical teaching: (1) Love is the fulfillment of the law; (2) Love is the bond of perfectness; (3) Love is the foundation of the brotherhood.

I. The relation of love to law always presents its difficulties. Law prescribes certain courses of conduct and forbids others. It may desire that the motives of those obeying the law be sincere, but laws deal only with actions not with attitudes. The law can compel a man to support his wife and it can punish him if he mistreats her; but no law can compel a man really to love his wife and be faithful to her in thought and in action. Though love is an ethical obligation, it cannot be enforced by any outward pressure. It is an obligation which must be freely chosen and voluntarily accepted.

Christianity came into a world where religion was interpreted in terms of a law. The Rabbis counted 613 separate commandments which every Jew should obey. We must not caricature this legalism for there was much sincere religious devotion among the Pharisees who sought to lay down rules for every emergency in life. But Paul and the later Christians insisted that Christ had made an end to every legalistic interpretation of religion. He was the end of the law, in the sense that obedience to fixed commandments could not be the basis for man's acceptance by God. That did not mean a lowering of the ethical expectation. Rather, the whole law of God was summed up in one commandment, "You shall love your neighbor." Since love never wrongs a neighbor, it is the fulfilling of the law.

This point of view is reflected throughout the New Testament. According to the Gospel of John, the one commandment given to men was that they should love one another as Christ had loved them. Those who love God will keep His commandments; but the only commandment is to love. James called this the royal law, and again, the law of liberty. Here is the height of paradox. Are not liberty and law even more antithetical than love and law? To answer that question will lead us into a fuller understanding of the law of love.

Paul likewise insisted that freedom went hand in hand with fulfilling the law through love. But freedom did not mean liberty to do as one pleased. Freedom stood opposed to detailed rules. Man had not been set free from an external religious law in order to follow the bent of his own passions. He had been set free in order that he might genuinely love. No one ever fell in love by following a rule book. A lover does not expect to be told everything that he should do for the welfare of his beloved. It lies in its very nature that love finds the way. A person must be free if he is to love; yet if he truly loves he is not free to do as he pleases, but he is free to seek the good of the object of his love.

The ethical obligation which rests upon an individual is usually described as the moral law. When Christianity affirms that love is the fulfillment of the law, it refuses to distribute ethical duty over many separate commandments. That kind of "heteronomy" leads to anxious fears. What if I have forgotten one of the commandments? John affirmed, "Love casts out fear," for complete devotion to this one aim is the full ethical duty of man. Paul said that there is no law against love, and he might have added that no law can produce it. Love is the fruit of the Spirit of God dwelling in the hearts of men. Its flowering depends upon the achievement of that true liberty which makes possible the seeking of new and more adequate ways of expressing love.

Law that is written in a code is static and restricting; the love that fulfills the law is creative and dynamic. It never expects to be told what one must do, and men will inevitably disagree on what love calls for in any particular situation. In love the "how" is always more important than the "what." What we should do differs with the changing circumstances, but the love which seeks new forms of expression does not change. It only grows in insight and social imagination.

II. It is difficult to express love amid all of the relationships of life until its white light is broken down into its component colors. Paul

followed a list of the most important Christian virtues by saying, "Put on love, the bond of perfectness." Love is not so much one single virtue, as a bond which unites many qualities into a living whole. We cannot cultivate love without cultivating these separate strands which are woven into the strong rope which will successfully meet every test.

In the famous thirteenth chapter of his first letter to the church at Corinth, Paul characterized those strands most fully. He was not writing to men and women who were fettered by a legalistic interpretation of religion, but to those who supposed that emotional ecstasy was the highest spiritual gift. Paul began by affirming rather the *supremacy* of love. The concluding verses stressed the *permanence* of love. Other gifts pass away and come to an end; "faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love." The central section gives an incomparable description of the *nature* of love, from which we shall draw seven of its most significant aspects.

(1) Love is *patient*; it must always be willing to wait, for its conquests are never made all at once. In forbearance it believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. (2) Love is *kind*; few expressions carry a richer overtone of satisfaction than this little word. One of Paul's phrases should probably be translated, "Love covers all things"; or as one has paraphrased it, "It is always slow to expose." (3) Love is *humble*; jealousy and boastfulness are a denial of the self-effacing spirit of love; envy and conceit are excluded, for love makes no parade. (4) Love is *courteous*; it cannot be arrogant or rude without denying its essential character; good manners are a part of conduct that deserves to be called good. (5) Love is *unselfish*; it never insists on its own way, but seeks the common good. Selfishness is the very antithesis of love. (6) Love is *good-tempered*; here is a sphere which tests true love most severely; it does not become irritated or provoked; it is never angry nor resentful. (7) Finally, love is *sincere*; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Without integrity, love is a counterfeit. Therefore, Paul says, "Let love be genuine."

When we are faced with a description like this, we know why our own love has so often failed. It has not risen above an easy amiability, a highly selective sentimentality toward those whom we happen to like. When love has met a real test, as in facing those who have wronged us, it has hardened into a leaden lump of hate, or shriveled to dry dust. The bond of perfectness has not been there, for so many of these strands

have not been present. Since love presents such a limitless goal, perfect love is never completely attained. Yet we should ever strive toward it. It may be self-defeating to try, like Benjamin Franklin, to cultivate individual virtues one by one. Love must have fresh spontaneity; it can never be the result of painful effort. It must not be a duty to which we drag reluctant feet, but a joyous expression of gratitude for the love by which God has loved us in Christ. But the use of a checklist like this may keep our love from becoming partial and thoughtless. Then love will truly "bind everything together in perfect harmony."

III. Finally, love is *the foundation of the brotherhood*. The early Christians lived in the midst of a world that was hostile to their standards and ideals. Opposition and persecution drove them together, bound as they were by sharing in the same religious experiences. Toward the outside world, they had abundant opportunity to test their ability to practice forbearance, to bless those who persecuted them, and to reject all thought of revenge. Though in their human frailty they did not always succeed, at least their standard was to meet opposition by good conduct that would show their love. But within the brotherhood, united by their response to God's love for them, it was possible for love to reach full intensity. Here it was on that mutual plane where each sought the other's good and none was sacrificed for the other.

Over and over again in the New Testament the love of the brotherhood stands in the foreground of the moral teaching. "Love one another with brotherly affection. . . . Let brotherly love continue. . . . Love one another earnestly from the heart. . . . We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren." This was a goal which was realized to a very large extent. They rejoiced and sorrowed with each other; they shared their material goods; if one was in want, it was a responsibility for the entire brotherhood. The food that was brought for the celebration of the Lord's Supper went also for the relief of the poor. Such large sums were raised in this sharing within the brotherhood that pagan writers exclaimed, "See how they love one another!"

The tests of love within the brotherhood were found not only in caring for each other's physical and material needs. Probably the most crucial strain came in bridging the honest differences of opinion which inevitably arose within the Christian communities. Some of the most interesting parts of the New Testament show how they grappled with the



divisions which threatened to destroy brotherhood. For instance, at Corinth there were "strong" who were convinced that since idols had no real existence, food sacrificed to them could not be different from other food. On the other hand, the "weak" felt it was spiritually dangerous to eat sacrificial meat. Again at Rome there were vegetarians who felt that it was wrong to eat any meat, and sabbatarians who called for the legalistic observance of certain days.

In discussing these issues, Paul made it clear that nonmoral taboos were indefensible in the light of the freedom with which Christ had set men free. But since the law of love was now basic for the Christian, he must consider the effect of his conduct upon his brethren. Such practices as these might not be wrong in themselves, but if they brought a stumbling block to others, these "rights" must be foregone. Paul had many rights which he had given up for the good of the brotherhood. All who truly love in the spirit of Christ must be willing to do the same. We must not give offense to "the brother for whom Christ died."

Many centuries have intervened and the place of the Christian church in society has greatly changed. With that change has disappeared entirely too much of the love of the brotherhood that marked the primitive church. For many nominal Christians, other ties are much closer than the bond of a common gratitude for God's love as revealed in Christ. In the midst of a world where there are so many tragic divisions, the Church in every land needs to rediscover this foundation of brotherhood. When we joyfully recognize an obligation toward men in every country as the "brother for whom Christ died," then love will find a way to overcome our divisive selfishness and put war in the course of ultimate extinction. If we belong to a brotherhood that exists in every land, we can never join the hate-mongers who assume the eternal necessity of strife.

One of the finest descriptions of the Christian life is found in the words, "Faith working through love." Christian experience begins in faith. That is not a synonym for self-confidence nor a vague belief in a power not our own. Faith is trust in a God who revealed Himself in an act of self-sacrificing love. If that faith is genuine, it expresses itself through love, for it is faith in one of whom it was written "God is love."

## Tercentenary of the Westminster Assembly of Divines

THOMAS CLINTON PEARS, JR.

THE year 1943 has been marked by several notable celebrations of the Tercentenary of the Westminster Assembly of Divines. But perhaps the most interesting celebration was that conducted by the Presbyterian Historical Society of England, which arranged a pilgrimage to Westminster Abbey, where they were the guests of the Dean, who related some of the historical associations of the famous Jerusalem Chamber, where most of the sessions of the Assembly were held. Much interest has been evidenced in this ancient synod, and rightly, too—for it provided many abiding values in the American tradition.

The Reformation in England under Henry VIII was far from complete. Indeed it had accomplished little more than the breaking of the shackles which bound the Church of England to Rome, retaining many of the ancient superstitions and practices. In protest there arose the movement broadly known as Puritanism, which ranged all the way from those who were content to purge the ritual of the last vestige of Romanism, to those who began to show a disposition to bring about a fundamental change in the form of government of the Church.

When the Stuarts came to the throne of England, they threw the full weight of their influence on the side of Episcopacy, which appeared to be so closely bound up with all the despotic measures of Charles I and Archbishop Laud, that a change to a Presbyterian form of government began to be advocated by an increasing number. And when the king finally was compelled to call what was to be known as the "Long Parliament," it was found to contain a majority who looked favorably upon the extirpation of Episcopacy "root and branch."

The description which occurs in the opening paragraph of *The Mysterie of the Two Juntos*, by Clement Walker, may serve to bring vividly before us the situation at this interesting juncture of events:

"The Kingdome being overgrowne with Prerogative, Corruption, and Superstition (the fruits of a long and lazie peace), by a long discontinuance of Parliaments; At last by Providence his Majestie was necessitated to call a Parliament the onely Colledge of Physitians to purge the much

distempered body of the Common-wealth. In this Parliament a contest betweene the *Kings prerogative* and the *Peoples lawes and libertyes* begat a warre. The Divines on both sides out of their pulpits sounding Alarme thereto: and not onely Sermons; but Declarations of Parliament, and the Nationall Covenant (holding forth to the people the defence of Religion, Lawes, Libertyes, and propertyes) inflamed the people to the rage of battell, as the Elephant is enraged at the sight of Red."

Moved by these considerations, and being now at open civil war against the King, Parliament passed an Ordinance on June 12, 1643, calling "an Assembly of learned, godly and judicious Divines . . . to confer and treat among themselves of such matters and things, touching and concerning the liturgy, discipline, and government of the Church of England, for the vindicating and clearing of the doctrine of the same, from all false aspersions and misconstructions, as shall be proposed unto them by both or either said houses of Parliament." And it directed them "to meet and assemble themselves at Westminster, in the Chapel called King Henry VII's Chapel, on the first day of July, in the year of our Lord One thousand six hundred and forty-three."

Named in the Ordinance, in addition to ten members from the House of Lords and twenty from the House of Commons, were one hundred and twenty-one Divines, chosen from the different shires of England, and representing the four principal parties, or rather points of view, of the Church of England of that period: Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Independents and Erastians. To this body there were later added Commissioners from the Kirk of Scotland.

It is one of the tragedies of Anglo-Saxon Protestantism that all these parties were not represented, and that all did not seek to work together harmoniously, with mutual forbearance and respect for one another's point of view. King Charles, however, forbade the Episcopalians to attend, and Daniel Featley was the only one who became a member, taking an active part in the debates, though later expelled. The Independents and the Erastians were small but extremely influential groups, and came to grips continually with the Presbyterians who were in the vast majority. This was the second tragedy, that the Presbyterians and Independents engaged in such bitter controversies, having so much in common at stake, and being destined "within twenty years to become companions in distress in the Great Ejectment."

Various estimates have been formed of the merits of the Divines,

from that of Clarendon, who speaks of them with contempt and scorn, to that of Richard Baxter, who affirms that they were men of eminent learning and godliness, ministerial ability and fidelity; and "so far as I am able to judge by the information of all history . . . the Christian world since the days of the apostles had never seen a Synod of more excellent divines." Be that as it may, the Assembly numbered many men of the highest ability. Men of ripe scholarship, erudition, preachers and masters of debate. Men eminently fitted for the task to which they had been called, to consult and advise with Parliament on matters of religion.

For a summary of what was accomplished during the five years that the Assembly was in regular session, we can do no better than to quote from *A Letter from the House of Commons To the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Containing a Narrative of The Proceedings of the Parliament of England in the Work of Reformation*, printed in London in 1648:

It is very well known how great a party in this Kingdom were ingaged for upholding of Prelacy; yet they (the Parliament), notwithstanding all discouragements and hazards to themselves, have taken away and extirpated that Government, so disagreeable to what is practiced in other Reformed Churches, and prejudicial to the power of Godliness.

And because the peace of the Church, and power of Religion cannot long continue without good Order and Discipline establisht therein, they called an Assembly of Godly, Learned, and Orthodox Divines from all parts of the Kingdom, with whom some Commissioners of the Church of Scotland joyned, to sit at Westminster; and after Consultation had with them, Both Houses took away the Service-Book, commonly called *The Book of Common-Prayer*, and establisht *A Directory for Worship*, commanding the practice of it in all the Churches and Chappels of this Kingdom: And, instead of Episcopacy they have set up Presbyterial Government in the Church, which is already settled in many parts of the Kingdom, and do (by God's assistance) resolve to pursue the further perfecting and establishment of it in all parts, both in England and Ireland.

They have approved and passed *The Confession of Faith* (or *Articles of Christian Religion*) as it came from the Assembly of Divines, with some small Alterations (onely some small part is yet under consideration) the rest being printed and published by Authority of Parliament.

They have passed a greater and less *Catechism* that came from the Assembly of Divines.

They have taken away all Superstitious Ceremonies and Popish Innovations.

They have given Authority for the Demolishing of all Representations of any Persons of the Trinity, Saint or Angel, and taking away all Altars, Crosses, Crucifixes, Pictures, and all other Monuments of Idolatry and Superstition in any Church, Chappel or Place within this Kingdom.

They have passed an Ordinance for the punishing of Blasphemies and Heresies.

They have passed an Ordinance for the Ejecting of Scandalous Ministers

and Schoolmasters; and thereupon have removed many, in whose stead they have placed godly and able Men.

They have passed an Ordinance, That none shall enter the work of the Ministry, but such as are Ordained thereto.

They have given all the Incouragement, and made the best provision they could for the maintenance of a godly Preaching Ministry throughout the Kingdom, not onely in removing the Ignorant and Scandalous, but in augmenting Maintenance for painful Ministers, both out of the Impropriations of Bishops, the Estates and Revenues of Deans and Chapters, and out of the Impropriations of Delinquents, which they bought out and settled upon Churches that wanted maintenance, to a very great value.

They have purged the Universities and chief Schools of the Kingdom (which are the Seminaries of Learning, and Education of Youth) of many Heads of Houses, Fellows and Schollers that were Superstitious, Prelatical and Malignant, and have placed in their stead such as are well-affected to Reformation of Religion, and Uniformity with other Reformed Churches.

They have passed several Ordinances for the better Observation of the Lords-day, and days of publique Fast and Thanksgiving, and have condemned all Licentious practices upon those days; and have ordered the Books formerly written in favour of them, to be publicly burnt.

They have passed an Ordinance for suppressing all Stage-Plays and Interludes (the Nurseries of Vice and Prophaneness).

And although we must needs say, That the greatest let and impediment which we have met with in settling the Reformation of Religion (according to the Covenant) hath come from His Majesty, who by His refusing hitherto to grant our Desires for the taking away of Episcopacy and the Service-Book, and to settle the Directory of Worship, and Presbyterian Government; and by denying his concurrence to establish them by Act of Parliament, hath given great occasion to men of unsound Judgements, to spread their Opinions and Errors (which is not unusual in times of Reformation) when the settling of it is long delayed.

And further, by his declaring in his late Message from the Isle of Wight, That he thinks himself obliged both as a Christian and as a King, to employ whatever power God shall put in his hand for the upholding of Episcopacy, he hath given great encouragement to the Popish, Malignant and Prelatical party to endeavour by Plots and Designs, and now again by open force, the reintroducing of Episcopacy and the Service-Book, which by the Conjunction of the Scottish Army with their Forces, they have now great hopes to effect; yet (by God's assistance who hath helped us hitherto) it shall be our care and endeavour against all dangers and discouragements whatsoever, to proceed in the work of Reformation until it be perfected.

This is a fair statement of the joint accomplishments of Parliament and Assembly during the period 1643-1648 which it covers, which may be termed the period of creative activity. As to the subsequent history of Presbyterianism in England, we were not at present concerned. Suffice it to say that the Assembly failed in its primary object, to achieve uniformity in doctrine, worship, discipline and government for the three kingdoms "for all time to come." Nevertheless their historic contribution



was of the utmost value, as is clearly set forth in the preamble to the resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church a century ago, appointing the Bicentenary celebration:

Whereas the meeting and the acts of the Westminster Assembly, now 200 years ago, are honorably associated in the history of theology and of the Protestant cause, with eternal principles of truth that are dear to every genuine Christian, to every friend of God and the progress of human society; to every lover of the Church and the Reformation—especially to the Puritans of illustrious memory, and to the pilgrims from whom many of us lineally, and all of us morally are descended, therefore, *Resolved*, . . . .

In Dr. S. W. Carruthers' new book, *The Everyday Work of the Westminster Assembly*, the multifarious activities of the Divines are set forth in fascinating detail. But for all their preoccupation with a great variety of tasks, their chief contribution consists in the five great documents which they composed: *The Confession of Faith*, *The Larger and Shorter Catechisms*, *The Directory for the Public Worship of God* and *The Form of Church Government*.

Instead of attempting to appraise these classic formularies, we will content ourselves with Dr. Frederick W. Loetscher's considered judgment concerning the first and by all odds the most important, *The Confession of Faith*:

The Confession is the ripest and best fruit of seventeenth-century theology. As was to be expected it made the doctrine of the Covenants its organizing principle, for this mode of presenting the Reformed faith had become dominant among the Scotch and English as well as among Continental Calvinists. The range of truth surveyed in this formulary is no less impressive than the elaborateness of some of the major discussions. In logical sequence, with exceptional lucidity, caution, and balance, and in language that is as carefully guarded and precise as it is warm with the fervor of deep conviction, weighty testimony is borne to every cardinal element of our evangelical religion. Moderate and irenic in spirit, avoiding partisan shibboleths and the over-refinements sponsored by a few of its members, the Westminster Assembly in this noble manifesto promulgated what must still be regarded as our most adequate statement of generic Calvinism.

"Although the Westminster Assembly of Divines occupies but small space in the ordinary history books, it may reasonably be argued that it has had a wider and deeper influence than the victories of Cromwell's Ironsides, or even the work of the Long Parliament. In England, where it met, that is perhaps not so; but in Scotland and Ireland, in America and in other lands to which Scots and Irish emigrated, it has wielded a tremendous power, directly and indirectly."

This is the opening paragraph of a little brochure by Doctor Car-

ruthers recently published by the Presbyterian Church of England: *The Westminster Assembly: What It Was and What It Did*. It furnishes us with a new approach to the importance of the famous gathering "of learned, godly and judicious Divines," and has much to recommend it to the serious student of American Church History. For the "five formularies," although never fully adopted by the Parliament of England, were formally approved by the Kirk of Scotland and ratified by the Scotch Parliament and thence have become the basis of the constitutions of all the Presbyterian Churches throughout the Anglo-Saxon world.

Confining our discussion to Colonial and Revolutionary America, the evidence of the importance of the Westminster Assembly in the theological, moral, social, political and revolutionary thought of America, is not only abundant, but of tremendous significance. Professor Sweet, in Volume I of his work, *Religion on the American Frontier*, quotes Professor Briggs as saying that in 1775, "the Presbyterians and Congregationalists combined had the ecclesiastical control of the American colonies"; and that, "upon their action the destinies of America depended." And Doctor Sweet adds: "Even after discounting this statement as one colored by denominational pride, careful investigation will show that this generalization is not far from the truth."

When we ask what bearing the work of the Westminster Assembly had on this situation, the answer is not far to seek. The three churches whose record challenges comparison throughout the Colonial and Revolutionary periods, in the struggle for civil and religious liberty, were the Baptist, Congregational and Presbyterian. In doctrine all three throughout the entire period under discussion, were of one mind, with the single exception of the question of baptism; and all three had formally adopted some modification of the Westminster Confession of Faith. While in discipline, they represented the two leading parties in the Assembly, the Presbyterians and the Independents; and were the joint heirs of the enthusiasm for both civil and religious liberty, which the labors of the Assembly had done so much to promote. For whatever may be said of the attitude of the Presbyterian members of the Assembly on the subject of toleration, the Presbyterians in America were from the very beginning, as powerfully its champions as were either their Baptist or Congregational brethren.

In pointing out some of the abiding values of the work of the Westminster Assembly, as they have entered into the American tradition, and

have become a part of American thought and life, we have no disposition to claim originality for the Divines, or that they held a monopoly of any of these principles. We prefer to think of the achievement of the Assembly as the acclimatizing of the fundamental principles of Calvinism to the air and soil of the British Isles, and their crystallization in good old Anglo-Saxon phrases for the benefit of the men and women of our race. Neither have we any brief for what may be termed the "distinctive features" of Calvinism; but are concerned with the fundamental principles of the Protestant Reformation, many of which have been mediated through the Westminster standards to other American communions as well as to their denominational heirs.

In what is to follow, we shall attempt to show in the case of each principle discussed, that it "is either expressly set down" in one or other of the Westminster formularies, "or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced" from them; and that the principle in question has become so closely identified with the American tradition that the two are practically inseparable. What has determined the choice of the particular principles to be discussed, is the existence of the present crisis, in which certain fundamental issues are at stake concerning which the Christian Church has a vital and timely message to deliver.

The first of these principles, the formal principle of the Reformation, is that of the *Supremacy of Scripture*. The Westminster Confession of Faith begins where the Westminster Divines themselves began, with the Word of God as the final authority in faith and practice. The first chapter, "Of the Holy Scripture," still remains an incomparable statement of this fundamental Christian doctrine. For felicity of expression and balance of phrase, the fifth section would be remarkable even apart from the profound truth which it affirms:

We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church to a high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scripture. And the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is, to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the entire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of God: yet notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts.

The authority of the Scripture is the key to all the deliberations of the Assembly. Each member was required to take the following vow: "I

do seriously promise and vow in the presence of Almighty God, that in this Assembly whereof I am a member, I will maintain nothing in point of doctrine but what I believe to be most agreeable of the Word of God, nor in point of discipline, but what may make most for God's glory and the peace and good of His Church."

The account of their debates is further proof. These consisted largely in mobilizing the resources of Scripture in support of their arguments, and include many learned and scholarly discussions of the sense of the sacred text. They were careful, moreover, to buttress their conclusions by marginal scriptural references. In a word, each and every document which came from their hands bears witness to their dependence upon the Word, and all are literally saturated with scriptural phraseology.

Perhaps no fact in American history is capable of more abundant proof from contemporary records, than that America was, in a very real sense, founded upon the Bible. And it is equally demonstrable that this phenomenon was due in part to the men who came to these American shores "with the Bible in one hand and the Westminster Confession of Faith in the other."

The central truth in the minds of the Westminster Divines was the *Sovereignty of God*. This conviction dominates their thought at every point. Their theology "is not only theocentric, it is theocratic. It not only sees God at the center, it sees Him on the throne. It exalts God supremely." They expressed this belief in the following words:

God hath all life, glory, goodness, blessedness, in and of himself; and is alone in and unto himself all-sufficient, not standing in need of any creatures which he hath made, nor deriving any glory from them, but only manifesting his own glory in, by, unto, and upon them: He is the alone fountain of all being, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things; and hath most sovereign dominion over them, to do by them, for them, or upon them whatsoever himself pleaseth.

The doctrine of the divine sovereignty was destined to prove one of the most dynamic principles in the development of Western civilization in the centuries immediately succeeding the Reformation. There is a sense in which it may be said to have *created* the great historic nations which have borne the banner of Christian Democracy, and have driven back the frontiers of ignorance, unbelief and despotism. It helped to lay the foundations of the American Republic. Our fathers clearly discerned that it was God's hand which led them to these shores, and our leaders have always professed to see God's hand in our nation's history.

In difficult days they have always "heartily laid them a-hold on the greatness of God."

The famous deliverance by the Westminster Divines on *Liberty of Conscience* should be familiar to every lover of true liberty, as well as to every friend of democracy:

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men, which are in any thing contrary to his Word; or beside it, if matters of faith or worship. So that, to believe such doctrines, or to obey such commands, out of conscience: and the requiring of an implicit faith, and an absolute and blind obedience is to destroy liberty of conscience, and reason also.

The Presbyterians in the Assembly have been charged with intolerance. We need not be too deeply concerned. Much water has flowed under the bridge in the course of the last three centuries, and our modern conception is the result of a long and painful process. Neither should we confuse toleration with what is too often the result of ignorance or the lack of strong conviction. The Westminster Divines courageously proclaimed that *God alone is Lord of the Conscience*. And since, as Walter Lippmann has recently remarked, "Things often tend to become what they are called"; they deserve no little credit for putting into circulation such a pregnant phrase, which has since become a veritable slogan of religious liberty.

The word "*oecumenical*" occupies a significant place in the *Propositions Concerning Church Government* presented to Parliament by the Westminster Assembly of Divines, wherein they provided not only for "sessional, classical, provincial and national Assemblies," but for an "oecumenical" assembly as well. Their definition of the Church is likewise ecumenical, being conceived in no narrow sectarian terms, but all-embracing as is the gospel itself:

The catholic or universal Church which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the Head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

The visible Church, which is also catholic or universal under the Gospel (not confined to one nation as before under the law), consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion; and of their children: and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation.

Within the limits that were permitted to them, moreover, they earnestly endeavored to establish a form of government that would em-



brace "the three kingdoms," and bring them into "nearer agreement with the Reformed Churches abroad."

That Calvin himself was an earnest advocate of Christian unity is well known, and it is one of the major tragedies of Protestantism that his efforts to reach an agreement with Luther came to naught. Dr. John T. McNeill, in his scholarly work, *Unitive Protestantism*, concludes his discussion of Calvin's activity to achieve the reunion of Christendom with these words:

Had his ardent hopes been fulfilled, Protestantism would have taken the outlines of a church ecumenical and conciliar, in which the unity which was once attained on a monarchical principle of government . . . would have been succeeded by a general communion under the government of a representative body expressive of the voluntary cohesion of the states, cities, and groups participating. . . . If the resulting system had proved true to Calvin's idea of the communion of the saints, it would have given expression on a grand scale to Christian fraternity, catholicity, and democracy, reversed the process of dissolution in the church, exhibited to the distracted states of Europe an impressive pattern of spontaneous unity, and rendered the last four centuries of western history incomparably richer and happier than they have been.

These four principles, the Supremacy of Scripture, the Sovereignty of God, Liberty of Conscience and Ecumenical Christianity, may not be the four most important in the emphasis placed upon them by the Westminster Divines; but they are principles that need to be emphasized today if the Church is to meet the challenge which will confront it in the post-war world in which so many and such complicated problems will need to be solved.

We can conclude this paper no more appropriately, perhaps, than with the following paragraph from the Bicentenary Sermon, delivered one hundred years ago by the Rev. Nicholas Murray at Elizabeth-Town, N. J.:

"When the next centenary of the event which this day we commemorate rolls around, you and I, my brethren, will not be here. We shall all be in the grave. Previous to that time many changes will have passed over the earth. Human opinions, equally with the nations, will have undergone revolutions. But whatever changes or revolutions human society may undergo, may the next centennial anniversary find our standards as pure as they are today—and our people as sincerely and as cordially attached to them—and this ancient church, with other pastor and worshippers, as prosperous, peaceful and pure as it now is—and the world civilly and religiously regenerated through the action of those civil and religious principles which we this day confess and avow."

# The Effect of the Missionary Enterprise Upon the American Mind

KENNETH SCOTT LATOURETTE

**A** CONTINUING and little-appreciated factor in the shaping of the American mind has been the Christian missionary enterprise. One of the professed purposes of the earliest British colonies in what later became the United States was the spread of the Christian faith. In the fleeting and ill-fated settlement on Roanoke Island there was preaching to the Indians. Both the first and the second charter granted to Virginia, by James I in 1606 and 1609, respectively, formally declared that prominent among the objects of the undertaking was the propagation of the Christian religion. An avowed motive in the founding of the Pilgrim settlement at Plymouth was "a great hope . . . of laying some good foundation . . . for the . . . advancing of the gospel of the kingdom of Christ." The first charter of Massachusetts, which bears the date of 1628, expressed the desire to "win and invite the natives of that country to the knowledge and obedience of the only true God and Saviour of mankind and the Christian faith." From these beginnings to the present, the Christian missionary enterprise has been a phase of the life of this country. It has found many expressions. It has endeavored to hold to the Christian faith those who by heredity have been its adherents and to win those who are not professedly Christian, whether they are of European or non-European blood. It has been a companion of the westward-moving frontier of white settlement, proclaiming the Christian message, organizing churches, molding ideals and conduct, and contributing to the spiritual bases of the new commonwealths. It has met the immigrant from Europe, whether on the prairies, in mining and lumber towns, or in great manufacturing and commercial cities, and has built for him churches and schools and has endeavored to confirm him in his ancestral allegiance. It has sought out the non-Christian immigrants from the Far Orient. It has extended its scope to the many Indian tribes which represent the aboriginal population. It has been a powerful force in the life of the American Negroes. It has reached out beyond the borders of the United States and has sent its representatives to every continent and to many of the islands of the sea. Tens of thousands of Americans have

gone as missionaries to other countries. They are to be found in all the republics of Latin America, in several of the islands of the Pacific, in many of the political subdivisions of Africa, in some of the countries of Europe and in most of the nations of Asia. The majority of them have been Protestant but an increasing number are Roman Catholic. Upon the peoples outside the United States they have had marked effects. They have also, and usually in quite unnoticed fashion, through their going, the efforts required to send and maintain them, and their continuing contacts with their home constituencies, contributed to the shaping of the attitudes of hundreds of thousands of Americans.

Any accurate appraisal of the influence of the missionary enterprise on the American mind is impossible. So much is in the realm of the intangibles that it defies exact estimates and at times cannot be traced to its source. That, we may remind ourselves, is true of other important contributions to the soul of the nation. However, enough can be pointed out, even when it cannot be precisely measured, to afford some inkling of the importance of this factor in forming the American mind.

We must note, first of all, the place which the missionary enterprise had in the initial stages of white settlement. Every portion of the United States has had its frontier period. In the older sections of the Thirteen Colonies this had passed before the United States came into being. In other regions it persisted down to the close of the nineteenth century. In a few remote corners it has continued to this day. The prominence of the frontier during most of the course of the nation's life has helped to shape the American spirit. This has long been recognized by historians. Much of American democracy, with its belief in the values and basic equality of every person, its self-reliant individualism and its dream of giving to all the opportunity to prove their worth to share in the good things of life, goes back to the frontier. On the frontier, we are told, the social stratifications and inequalities of Europe and the older settlements tended to break down. Each man and woman had the opportunity to display his or her native worth. All were equal in the sight of the law. This in general was true of the frontier in the United States. It is very seldom noted that this was not similarly true of all frontiers of white settlement. The frontier in the United States differed in temper from that in French Canada and in Latin America, although all were in the Western Hemisphere and both the first two and much of the third were in the temperate zones. The frontier in the United

States made much more for what we term democracy than did that in French, Spanish and Portuguese America. An important reason for the difference is to be found in the type of Christianity which was propagated.

Much more than in Europe or even in the British Isles, the Christianity of the first stages of the history of the United States was that of the radical wing of the Protestant Reformation. The Protestant Reformation was an extremely varied movement, but it had as one of its dominant characteristics salvation by faith. By this was meant the faith of the individual Christian. As a corollary of salvation by faith there came the right and the duty of private, individual judgment in matters of religion and morals. Each Christian, so this view held, is responsible primarily to God. Neither church nor state must be permitted to come between him and God. All believers are priests. Luther declared that "a Christian man is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none." Then he hastened to add that "a Christian man is a perfectly dutiful subject of all, subject to all." He made much of the authority of the state. However, the extremists among the reformers tended to go much further in insisting upon the competence and the duty of the individual Christian to judge all institutions. Obviously they were deemed dangerous by the constituted authorities in state and church, whether in Roman Catholic or Protestant lands. Many of them sought refuge in the Thirteen Colonies. While some of the churches represented in the Thirteen Colonies were those which on the other side of the Atlantic were endorsed by the state and while several of the Thirteen Colonies had an established church, in general the trend was away from this precedent and toward a greater prominence of the left wing of Protestantism. It was this radical form of Protestantism which most multiplied on the frontier. For instance, Baptists, with their individualism and democratic form of church organization, were more characteristic of the frontier than they were of Great Britain. The camp meetings and the revivals through which much of the spread of Christianity on the American frontier was accomplished tended to emphasize individual salvation and worked against conformity to inherited ecclesiastical patterns. More than in Europe and Great Britain or even than on much of the Atlantic seaboard of the United States, it was through the extremely democratic forms of Protestantism that Christianity was propagated on the frontier. Here has been a little appreciated factor in the creation of American democracy.

Another important contribution of the missionary enterprise to the American mind through its activities on the westward-moving frontier was in the field of education. Scores of colleges and universities, some of them later among the most important in the country, owed their origin in part or entirely to the missionary impulse. It is a commonplace in the history of American education that the oldest of the universities in the United States, Harvard, was founded on what was then a close approach to the frontier for the purpose of preparing an indigenous clergy to give leadership to the churches when those who had come from England had died. Its charter of 1650, its fundamental source of authority in administration, dedicated the institution to "the education of the English and Indian youth . . . in knowledge and godlynes." Harvard clearly had its roots in the missionary impulse. Similarly William and Mary, the second oldest college in the Colonies, had as its original aim the training of a ministry for the Church in Virginia. One of its professorships was long designated for the teaching of Indians. Princeton traces its inception to the Great Awakening, a missionary movement among the white population, in part a frontier phenomenon. The University of Pennsylvania dates its beginnings from a charity school inspired by George Whitefield, during part of his life an itinerant missionary in the Thirteen Colonies. Dartmouth College was inaugurated on the then frontier to train missionaries to the Indians. As the frontier moved westward from the original states along the Atlantic seaboard, its course could be traced by the founding of colleges by religious bodies. Most of these were missionary institutions. They were for the purpose of providing education under Christian auspices for the children of the frontier. Many of them were intimately associated with the home missionary programs of their respective denominations and drew a large part of their original funds from donors in the older states who were impelled by missionary motives. At least three, Illinois College, Iowa (later Grinnell) College and Whitman College, owed either their inception or much of their foundation to bands of young men who went as missionaries from the older states to the frontier. A single home missionary from New England assisted in founding two colleges on the frontier, one in Indiana and one in Oregon. These instances might be multiplied almost indefinitely. Some of the institutions so begun attained great importance. For example, the College of California, inaugurated by the Presbyterians and Congregationalists in the early days of settlement from the older states, was the basis on



which later arose the University of California. In several states, among them Michigan, Illinois, South Dakota and Oregon, the public-school systems were deeply indebted to home missionaries.

The moral standards and discipline of the frontier and so of the ensuing communities owed much to home missionaries and to the churches which they founded. Thus the members of Baptist churches on the frontier covenanted with one another to "exercise a Christian care and watchfulness over each other, and faithfully warn, exhort and admonish each other as occasion may require." They actually did this by examining charges against one another of drunkenness, fighting, lying, stealing, irregular sexual relations, malicious gossip, failure to pay just debts, gambling and horse racing. The obdurately unrepentant might be excluded from church membership. Methodism, also strong on the frontier, by its class system through which its members were given fellowship and supervision in small groups, its local preachers and exhorters, and its structure of circuit riders and conferences, had a marked moral as well as spiritual influence over its members.

Christian missions had a large part in shaping the mind and the spirit of the immigrant. Some of the missionaries to the immigrants were from the Old World. Thus in colonial days Anglicans organized the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. Both organizations had the British colonies as their objective and addressed themselves to the white colonists as well as to the Indians and the Negroes. From the Pietist center at Halle, in Germany, came Lutheran missionaries to the German colonists, notably Henry Melchior Muhlenberg. Muhlenberg traveled widely, preaching, admonishing and disciplining those who were guilty of serious moral lapses, and administering the sacraments. In the eighteenth century help was also sent from Europe in funds and personnel to the Germans of the Reformed faith. Missionaries from the mother country went to the German immigrants of the nineteenth century. Most of them were from theologically conservative and Pietist circles. They helped to promote that type of mind in those to whom they ministered. They stood for sturdy morals and some of them fostered education. In the early days of the extensive nineteenth-century migration of Protestants from Scandinavia there came religious leaders from the homelands to nourish the settlers in their hereditary faith. Some of them were products of the revivals which swept Scandinavia in the nineteenth century

and which were in part from Pietistic and in part from Anglo-Saxon contacts. They were strict in morals and helped to give both ethical and spiritual vigor to the Scandinavian communities.

The majority of the immigrants of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were Roman Catholic by heredity. Most of them were from lands where the Roman Catholic Church was closely associated with the state. It was a question whether they would build churches and support a body of clergy, for that would have to be done by voluntary contributions and most of them were desperately poor and were having difficulty in establishing themselves in their new homes. It might be that they would drift away from all religion and become a secularized element in American life. That proved to be the case with numbers of them. Most of them and their children, however, remained true to the church of their fathers. For many the connection was nominal. For others it was vital.

The achievement of holding the Roman Catholic immigrants and their children to the faith was, as in the case of Protestants, accomplished in part by assistance from Europe. Many priests, lay brothers and sisters came from the Old World to serve the settlers in the United States. Here and there in Europe institutions were established specifically for the training of clergy for that country. There was such a one at Münster, another was at Louvain, and still another was in Italy, founded by the Bishop of Piacenza. Fairly large financial subsidies also were sent from Europe. The Society for the Propagation of the Faith, begun in 1822 at Lyons for the purpose of enlisting prayer and money for missions and eventually making itself felt in many lands both as a means of raising money and of providing subsidies for Roman Catholic missions, owed its origin in part to an appeal for aid by a Bishop of New Orleans. It long contributed substantially to the Roman Catholic enterprise in America. The Ludwig-Missionsverein, founded in Bavaria, made the United States its chief beneficiary.

As was the experience of Protestantism, most of the leadership and the funds for holding the Roman Catholic immigrants to the faith were from the United States itself. The achievement was notable. The overwhelming majority of Roman Catholics had low incomes. Out of these, in addition to caring for their own families, they built churches and a system of church schools. For many this meant in effect double taxation—such taxes as were collected from them to support the public schools, and fees and contributions which they paid to church institutions

that their children might have an education in which their faith would be taught concurrently with other subjects. Personnel to staff the churches and schools came increasingly and predominantly from the immigrants and their children.

In general this missionary effort for immigrants who were hereditarily Christian, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, had two groups of effects upon the American mind. One was the partial perpetuation in the United States of the cultural traditions of the several countries from which the immigrants came. So far as they maintained a church connection—and the large majority seem to have done so—for the most part the immigrants and their children had it with that branch of the Church to which they had been attached in the Old World. Some, both Protestant and Roman Catholic, changed their allegiance and became members of one or another of the churches of the older American stock. Naturally this trend increased in the second and third generations of American-born. Intermarriage, conviction, or social convenience encouraged it. Yet the majority, especially of the immigrants and the first generation of the American-born, held to the particular church of their fathers. Often that church was the chief institution which reminded them of the life of the country of their origin. In its pulpit and, if Protestant, also in the rest of its public services it perpetuated the familiar mother tongue. The church provided a convenient social center for those of the same national background. In the course of time much of the hold-over from the European past faded out. Because of the demand of the second or third generation, the mother tongue was replaced by English, although usually not without a struggle. Roman Catholic parishes made up exclusively of those of one European country diminished in numbers. The Roman Catholic Church deliberately set itself against the perpetuation in its organization of Old World differences and insisted upon being American and, so far as that could be done without surrendering its basic and historic teaching and practice, upon becoming identified with the national life. The large Lutheran bodies tended to cling to the national traditions inherited from the Old World, even when English had become the language of the service. The smaller Eastern churches, of which the various branches of the Orthodox were the chief ones, did likewise. The persistence of the different ecclesiastical traditions made for variety in the American scene and the American mind. It led to a much more multiform Christianity than had ever been found elsewhere in the world.

As a corollary, the trend was toward an American Christianity as a feature of the American spirit. This was not by formal ecclesiastical union, although there was some of that within Protestantism. Nor was it being accomplished chiefly by official co-operation among the different bodies, although that increased. It came, rather, by the interpenetration, often almost unnoticed, of the practices and ideals of one religious body by those of another. Most Protestant hymnals drew from authors of many denominational allegiances. The National Conference of Christians and Jews brought together Protestants and Roman Catholics, usually clergymen, as well as Jewish rabbis, for reciprocal understanding. Among the rank and file of laymen the interpenetration was even more marked. Intolerance persisted and occasionally flared forth, but the trend was in the opposite direction. There was no indication that the historic differences which separated Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Orthodox from one another would be erased. Yet, by the association forced by geographic propinquity, a certain community of mind was beginning to emerge to which each of the various traditions contributed.

A second effect of the missionary effort for Christian immigrants was the perpetuation in the American mind of the spiritual and moral traditions of the Christian faith. Much of the movement of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was in the direction of materialism and secularism. Throughout the Occidental world this was true. The development of science and the application of the findings of science to the meeting of the physical needs of men together with the amazing achievements in manufactures, transportation and medicine tempted men to assume that their wants could be met in this fashion and that religion was irrelevant. In the United States that tendency was especially strong. The vast natural resources of the land and their large-scale exploitation by the facilities provided by the machine made possible undreamed-of comfort for hundreds of thousands. It was not strange that men and women were inclined to be absorbed in the rush for wealth and to dream in what appeared to be materialistic terms. The immigrant, uprooted from his ancestral environment, cut off by the Atlantic from his old institutions, dazzled by the possibility of fortune, and pressed by the necessity of making a living under the new conditions, might easily have allowed the Christian faith to drop out of his life. Many did so. The drift was especially strong in those born in the United States. That the secularization was in so small degree offset by idealism was due to what in its largest sense we have

called the missionary enterprise. Through the missionary enterprise, indeed, the faith of many was strengthened. For thousands Christianity became less formal and more vital than it had been in the Old World. In Europe, with its state churches, association with the Church was a matter of course. In the United States, where no religion was established by law, church membership was more a matter of individual initiative and choice and for many took on a deeper significance.

There were also Christian missions for some of the immigrants of non-Christian provenance. Most of the hereditary non-Christians were Jews. Very little effort was made by the churches, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, to reach them. Some Jews became Christians. Many remained with the synagogues or allied themselves with liberal Judaism. The majority tended to move away from all religion and preserved only a few of the formal customs of their forebears. For immigrants from the Far East, much less numerous than the Jews, the churches carried on an active missionary enterprise. This was chiefly by the Protestant bodies of the older American stock. Quite a large proportion of the Chinese, Japanese and Koreans became Christians and were thus brought into conformity with that element of the American mind. In general, moreover, their missionary interest led the churches to espouse the cause of the Orientals against the legal and social discrimination imposed upon them. The missionary forces sought to have the same treatment accorded Orientals in immigration quotas and in naturalization as was given to immigrants from Europe. In the vast dislocation of the Japanese in the Continental United States following Pearl Harbor, the missionary agencies labored to ameliorate the lot of the interned and to facilitate their relocation and their assimilation into normal American life.

The Christian missionary enterprise was a potent force in shaping the attitude of white Americans toward the Indians and of helping the Indians to adjust themselves wholesomely to the changed conditions brought by the dominance of the white man and his culture. This was true from the very beginnings of white settlement. Many of the more earnestly Christian colonists sought fair treatment for the Indians. The contention of Roger Williams that the land belonged to the Indians is famous. So, too, are his efforts to prevent wars between Indian tribes and between whites and Indians. The Friends were scrupulous in seeing that the lands acquired by them were sold to them, and willingly, by the Indians. In a famous case which went to the Supreme Court, missionaries sub-



mitted to imprisonment to protest the laws enacted by Georgia in derogation of the rights of the Cherokees. There were Christian missions to most of the Indian tribes. They were by Roman Catholics, Protestants and Russian Orthodox. Most of them were by the first two branches of the Church. They began in early colonial days and have continued to the present. In their earlier stages they included the famous Spanish Roman Catholic enterprises in what are now the southern portions of the country from Florida and Georgia to California, the notable French Roman Catholic activities in the Mississippi Valley, the Russian Orthodox efforts in Alaska, and the many Protestants along the Atlantic seaboard from John Eliot on the outskirts of Boston, the Mayhews on Martha's Vineyard, to the Moravians in Pennsylvania and Ohio, and the agents of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries they ranged from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the extreme South to the extreme North. They sought to win the Indians to the Christian faith and conducted schools for them. In the inevitable process of assimilation of these scattered racial minorities to the culture of the dominant white man, Christian missions embodied the idealism of the American mind and so helped to implant in the Indian that phase of the civilization to which he was conforming.

Much more numerous than the Indians were the Negroes. As in the case of the Indians, the missionary enterprise taken in its broadest sense both contributed to the attitudes of the white man toward the Negro and assisted the Negro in making a wholesome adjustment to the culture into which he had been involuntarily thrust and to acquire the idealistic and religious features of the American mind. The Christian conscience was the chief source of the movements to better the lot of the Negro, first through emancipation and then through education. As early as 1693 the Friends Philadelphia Yearly Meeting came out for the emancipation and education of the slaves owned by its members. In the last quarter of the eighteenth century the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting determined to exclude from membership all who declined to free their slaves. Religious revivals, which in America have been missionary movements to reach those not as yet Christian and to give fresh vigor to the faith of those already Christian, were fruitful sources of impulses to emancipate the Negro slaves. In 1776, Samuel Hopkins, an exponent of the Great Awakening and in the spiritual succession of Jonathan Edwards, asked the Continental Congress to abolish slavery. David Rice, an in-

defatigable evangelist and one of the earliest Presbyterian ministers in Kentucky, strove for the gradual emancipation of slaves in that state. Barton W. Stone, another leader of the revivals in Kentucky, freed his slaves. The great revivals in the first half of the nineteenth century associated with the name of Charles G. Finney gave a marked impetus to the antislavery movement. One of his converts, Theodore Dwight Weld, was a flaming missionary and organizer of the movement. Out of the revivals came Lyman Beecher, whose daughter, Harriet Beecher Stowe, wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, that potent literary contribution to emancipation.

The missionary agencies of the white churches contributed significantly to the education of the Negro. Indeed, at the outset practically all the secondary and higher schools for Negroes were their creation. Even today a very large proportion of the best colleges and universities for Negroes are those founded by these agencies. To them have been added in the course of the years others, some of them the creation of the Negro churches and some of them supported by public funds. Simply to list a few of the outstanding colleges and universities which were begun by white missionary agencies is, to anyone familiar with even the barest outlines of colored education, to show the part which the missionary spirit played in training Negro leaders. The American Missionary Association was the parent of Hampton Institute, whose chief creator, Samuel Chapman Armstrong, was the son of a missionary to Hawaii and whose most famous graduate, Booker T. Washington, was in the turn the main force in the birth and growth of Tuskegee. There also were Fisk University, Atlanta University, Talladega College, Tougaloo University, Straight University and Tillotson College. Howard University had its inception in a prayer meeting in the First Congregational Church of Washington, D. C. The place of the Christian missionary forces in the inauguration of education, and especially of higher education, for Negroes witnesses to one of the deep-seated convictions of the Christian missionary enterprise—the infinite worth of every human soul, the capacity of all men, no matter of what race, for spiritual and mental development, and their right to opportunity for that growth. That element in the American mind which has been most active in legal and social emancipation of the Negroes and for opening opportunities for spiritual, intellectual and social development is largely and is probably predominantly the product of the missionary impulse. The confidence and the devotion with which many Negroes have labored for these goals also are in part from this same source.

In the course of their sojourn in the United States, and especially after emancipation, the American Negroes have been extensively permeated by Christianity. The American Negro mind is to a considerable degree the creation of Christian missions. Approximately as large a proportion of Negroes as of whites are members of churches. Some of the spread of Christianity among the Negroes has been due to the efforts of white Christians, particularly in pre-emancipation days. More of it has been through the efforts of the Negroes themselves. The overwhelming majority of Negro Christians have been Protestants. This seems to have been because the religious contacts of the Negroes have been chiefly with Protestants. Except in Louisiana, Roman Catholics have not been prominent in the states which have been the traditional home of most of the colored people. Of the Protestant denominations the Baptists and Methodists have made the chief appeal to the Negroes. The overwhelming majority of Negro Christians have been in these two religious families. This fact seems to be associated with the extensive spread of the Baptists and Methodists among the lower-income strata of the older white American stock. Because the missionary methods of the Baptists and Methodists were best adapted to winning of what may be described as the proletariat of the older American white population, they succeeded among the Negroes. The extreme democracy of the Baptist organization has helped to nourish democracy in the Negro mind and institutions. The Methodist passionate conviction that all men can, if they will but accept the way freely offered by God in Christ, be saved and become children of God has also given dignity to the Negro soul. The emotionalism of the methods by which both Baptists and Methodists prosecuted their mission in approaching the whites struck a responsive chord in the Negro heart. Negro Christianity has in turn contributed to the nation as a whole through its "spirituals." Many of these spirituals were inspired by white prototypes, but in the forms in which they became known the country over they were essentially Negro creations.

Thus far we have been speaking of the effect of what might be called "domestic" missions. What are usually termed "foreign" missions have also had a marked, even though a still less easily measured effect upon the American mind.

Since at least the beginning of the nineteenth century the outlook of the missionarily-minded has tended to be global. It has embraced all mankind. Samuel J. Mills, who in the first two decades of the nineteenth

century was one of the most creative spirits in the American missionary enterprise, is said to have declared to one of his friends, "Though you and I are very little beings, we must not rest satisfied till we have made our influence extend to the remotest corner of this ruined world." In his own person Mills did much to embody that ideal. In his brief life (he died in his middle thirties), he was one of the moving spirits in the creation of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, he helped to initiate steps which later led to a mission to Hawaii, he made two journeys to the then frontier in the Mississippi Valley, he dreamed of a tour to South America to open that continent to Protestant missions and he died while on a trip to Africa which issued in the founding of Liberia. Throughout the nineteenth century the world outreach of Christianity was the dream of those most concerned for missions. In the latter part of the century a group of young men gave it phrasing in what became the watchword of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions—"the evangelization of the world in this generation." By this was not intended the winning of all the world to the Christian faith in a generation, still less the Christianization of the world in one lifetime. It declared, rather, that each generation of Christians has the obligation to give to all its contemporaries the world around the opportunity to hear the Christian message. Under the inspiration of the watchword tens of thousands of young men and women from the colleges and theological seminaries of the United States "volunteered" for foreign missions. Some of the leading spirits in the Movement, notably John R. Mott, were active, in the 1890's, in the formation of the World's Student Christian Federation, and, in the next century, of the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches. In other words, through their missionary purpose and vision Americans were helping to create among Protestant Christians a world-embracing fellowship which was holding out friendly hands to Christians of Eastern churches and, so far as the traditional gulf would allow, to Roman Catholics. That fellowship arose from the purpose of bringing the Christian message to the entire world and had among its objectives the permeation of all mankind with Christian ideals. It talked of "world conquest," but by that it meant not political or even cultural subjugation, still less ecclesiastical imperialism. It sought to bring into being the world around self-governing, self-supporting, self-propagating churches which would be knit together with other churches in all lands on the basis of equality. More and more

there arose into positions of prominence in the World's Student Christian Federation and the International Missionary Council, Christians from non-European peoples. It became a matter of pride that at the meeting of the International Missionary Council held in Madras in 1938, non-Occidental delegates approximately equalled in numbers those from Occidental lands.

This movement was predominantly Protestant. Until the second decade of the present century American Roman Catholics were so engrossed in the urgent task of providing clergy, churches and schools for the millions of their faith who were pouring across the Atlantic that they had little energy to spare for other countries. When, beginning with the World War of 1914-1918, a drastic reduction of immigration gave them opportunity to catch up with their domestic tasks and some of their number who had been longer in the New World began to share in the riches of the land and to rise above the lower-income levels, American Roman Catholics began also to reach out to other parts of the world. Through the very organization of their church, which places the word Catholic, or universal, to the fore, and which extends to almost every people, American Roman Catholics have an inducement to a world outlook. This world outlook has been somewhat slower to develop than among Protestants, but latterly it has had a striking growth.

The effect of this world-wide missionary enterprise upon the American mind is seldom appreciated. Even those most active in it are infrequently aware of how deeply it has molded the American outlook on the world. Literally millions have contributed financially to the enterprise. Not many of them have given a large proportion of their income. To most of them foreign missions have been a minor interest. Yet to a substantial minority, numbering thousands, they have been of major concern. Nearly every Protestant congregation has, under one name or another, its missionary society. Each of these has its officers, usually women. This interest is not selfish. Of the millions who have given to the support of missions and of the thousands who have gone as missionaries, very few have had any desire for the aggrandizement of themselves or of the United States. Indeed, a very large proportion of American missionaries have been in countries or regions, such as India, the Near East and the Belgian Congo, where the United States has had no political foothold and comparatively unimportant commercial contacts. In the Far East, where American missionaries have been particularly prominent, American political and commercial stakes have been large, but few of the



supporters of the first have had as a motive the reinforcement of the other two phases of American activity.

Accompanying the missionary enterprise has been an extensive education of the supporting constituency. In part this has been by addresses and sermons by missionaries on furlough, by secretaries of mission boards, or by other informed advocates. In part it has been through periodicals. In part it has been through textbooks designed for reading or for classes of various age groups. The periodicals have usually sold for a small subscription price and some of them have had a circulation of several thousand. Through the textbooks tens of thousands have been reached each year. Many of the texts have been undenominational. For instance, the Missionary Educational Movement serves a number of Protestant bodies. Each year it devotes its books to a particular area or type of work and has books for the several ages from the primary grades to adults. In the aggregate its books are probably read by at least a hundred thousand a year. In addition, several of the denominations prepare textbooks of their own. Some of the addresses and the periodicals have stressed the seamy side of the culture to which missionaries go. By so doing they would portray the need and elicit sympathy and support. Particularly in later decades, the textbooks and the periodicals have presented favorable as well as unfavorable aspects of other lands. The typical mission-study book now begins with a well-rounded description of the country which is its subject. It tells of the geography, the natural resources, the history, the culture and the current problems. As a rule the account is sympathetic and, if it departs from full objectivity, errs on the side of lauding the people whom it portrays. The text then goes on to an account of the missionary enterprise in that land, its achievements and its needs. Some of these books contain the best brief accounts of a land and its contemporary status to be found in the English language.

Through this missionary education thousands of Americans have obtained almost their sole knowledge of other peoples. For thousands of others it has been one of their sources. So Secretary Henry L. Stimson has declared: "The most widespread interest of our people in China is not commercial. . . . Our most general information of China has come through . . . the great missionary movement—religious, educational and medical—which has been carried on in China for nearly a century by the churches and humanitarian interests of this country."<sup>1</sup> Wendell

<sup>1</sup> H. L. Stimson, *The Far Eastern Crisis* (New York, 1936), p. 153.

L. Willkie bore independent testimony of the same tenor when he said: "Back in my home town in Indiana when I was a boy, we were always raising funds for foreign missions. Our Sunday schools provided us with books on foreign lands written by returning missionaries. They stimulated our interest in foreign countries."<sup>2</sup>

Through the missionary enterprise have come some of the American scholars who have contributed to the solid foundation of expert knowledge of other lands. This has been notable in the case of China. Most of the prominent American Sinologists have been missionaries or the children of missionaries. The outstanding American Sinologist of the second half of the nineteenth century was S. Wells Williams, who first went to China as a missionary. His *The Middle Kingdom* was long the best comprehensive treatment of China in the English language and his *A Syllabic Dictionary of the Chinese Language* remains the best of its kind produced by an American. When, in 1928, the American Council of Learned Societies set up its Committee on the Promotion of Chinese Studies, the original membership, supposedly the outstanding Sinologist in the country, was more than half of missionaries, former missionaries or children of missionaries.

Because of the prominence of China as a land to which American missionaries have gone, the knowledge of that country in the United States owes a peculiar debt to them. However, the insights into other lands brought to Americans through the missionary enterprise has by no means been limited to that country. South America, the Near East, India, Burma, Ceylon, the Philippines, Korea, Japan, South America and much of Africa would be far less known by great masses of Americans were it not for the missionary.

The missionary enterprise has, then, been an important agency in educating Americans in world-mindedness. Through planning in terms of "the evangelization of the world in this generation" it has taught thousands to think in global terms. By its very nature it has been anti-isolationist. It has helped to familiarize tens of thousands of Americans with country after country and people after people with whom they would otherwise have little or no direct contact.

Even more significantly, the missionary enterprise has contributed a particular kind of world-mindedness. It has encouraged thousands of Americans to think of the rest of the world not as a field for political

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<sup>2</sup> Address to the Presbyterian General Assembly, Detroit, May 31, 1943.

or commercial empire but as an opportunity for brotherhood. For more than forty years in the closing decade of the nineteenth century and the opening decades of the twentieth century the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions brought together at its quadrennial conventions more students from more different colleges and universities in the United States than did other gatherings. At one of these, held soon after the World War of 1914-1918, the hymn most frequently sung had among its lines: "not with swords' loud clashing, or roll of stirring drums; with deeds of love and mercy the heavenly kingdom comes." At another, held a few years later, when the clouds which later broke in the World War of 1939 were palpably gathering, a hymn repeatedly sung declared: "In Christ there is no East or West, in Him no South or North, but one great fellowship of love throughout the whole wide earth." Through the movement to which they provided slogans these hymns nurtured in a substantial minority of Americans the firm conviction that the world is one, that Christians must think in terms of the entire globe and not of any one country, race or segment, that that world should be a brotherhood all of whose members should unselfishly assist one another, and that it is the duty and the privilege of Christians to help bring that world into the realm of reality. As a foreshadowing of what that world might be, representatives of the best of other races—Negroes from Africa and from the United States, Chinese, Japanese, Indians and others—were brought onto the platforms of these student and other missionary gatherings to speak on behalf of their respective peoples, books written sympathetically about their own peoples by citizens of other countries were widely circulated, textbooks on the problem of race as a world issue, presenting generous views of other peoples and suggesting concrete solutions for interracial tensions were prepared and widely studied, and after the outbreak of the World War of 1939 and on the eve of Pearl Harbor a book which sold more than fifty thousand copies was circulated among students and churches advocating world order from the standpoint of all mankind as the family of God.

The type of world-mindedness inculcated by the missionary enterprise may seem to some to ignore the hard facts of life. To speak of the "whole wide earth" becoming "one fellowship of love" appears to ignore the crass and aggressive selfishness which are chronic and at times rampant. Without seeking either to defend or to challenge that attitude, one must point out three related facts of the missionary attitude. Those

who have taken it have been aware of human frailty and have called it by a stronger word, sin. To Mills and his fellows it was a "ruined world" to which they were called to go. Yet they were convinced that in the Christian gospel is the "good news" of power to meet and overcome sin. Inspired by that belief, tens of thousands of Americans have given their lives, many of them in difficult situations in the United States, and others in the various lands beyond the borders of the United States.

In the Christian missionary enterprise has been one of the potent factors shaping the American mind. It has made for the view that every man, whether in the United States or in any other country of the world, is of infinite worth, and that this worth is irrespective of color, race or class. It has taught that there is at the heart of the universe, and governing it, One who is seeking to lift all men out of the sad condition in which they find themselves to a life, both now and hereafter, or undreamed-of richness of spirit, a life lived in love and adoration of God and in respect and love for all other men. It has declared it to be the duty of every Christian to work for the realization of that ideal and has held that when one so gives himself he has the assistance of infinite power. This element in the American mind is by no means dominant. Yet it must be reckoned with by anyone who would understand the United States. It has made itself felt and continues to do so not only in what is usually called the religious realm but also in movement after movement for social reform, both domestic and world-wide. In the domestic scene it has contributed to the emancipation and advancement of the Negro, the protection of the Indian and the struggle for greater opportunity for all the underprivileged. On the world-wide scene it has been one of the chief sources—historically, indeed, the original impulse—of the movement for world peace and world organization. It has sought to fight disease, ignorance, vice and the exploitation of man by his fellows in every quarter of the globe. At times it has seemed to be a waning factor. Yet on a world-wide scale it has had its most extensive expressions in the present century. In the midst of world war it is planning hopefully for the decades ahead. It knows that these are to be stormy, but, in the words of one of the most influential of the American leaders of the missionary enterprise of the past four or five decades, paraphrasing the words of a great missionary of the first century of the Christian era, it believes that where sin, national and international, has abounded, grace can much more abound.

# The Bible and Christian Education

ADELAIDE TEAGUE CASE

A WAVE of interest in the Bible is spreading over the country. Not in sophisticated circles perhaps but among ordinary people everywhere. Sunday schools report a great demand for Bible-centered material. College and university Bible classes are having a sudden popularity. Bible storybooks and picture books appear in large quantities and have a warm welcome. *The Robe*, that romantic portrayal of the gospel story, is praised by men and women, young and old; and publishers are bold enough to put out a new fictional treatment of David, and a story of Joshua for the general public which includes within its covers the entire biblical text of the Book of Joshua. In hundreds of cities throughout the country children are being excused from public schools to go to the churches for Bible study because parents are at last aroused lest the teachings associated with the sacred Scriptures should perish from the life of our country.

It is not my purpose to determine the reasons for this situation. No doubt the current disparagement of religious liberalism has a good deal to do with it. In these days "liberalism" is interpreted—though this seems strange to some of us—not as enlightened understanding of the Bible and religious history but as a departure from the faith grounded on the Bible and the substitution of a shallow philosophy of utopian optimism and philanthropic good will. Such liberalism we are rightly taught to despise. We are urged to return to the "myths" of Creation, the Fall of Man, the Atoning Sacrifice of Christ, recounted in the Holy Scriptures. However clearly the ancient stories may be regarded in authentic Niebuhrian theology as essential *symbols* and treated as such, the common man—not sufficiently subtle to appreciate the dialectic between reason and emotion, between intellectual truth and spiritual significance—looks upon this new trend in religious thought as primarily a return to the Bible and Bible religion without benefit of the critical insights of despised liberalism.

The return to the Bible has received considerable impetus from the terrific need for security and reassurance universally felt in the midst of the overwhelming tragedy of war. Eddie Rickenbacker and his companions in their frail craft on the open sea have dramatized this need in an unforgettable experience. In their desperation they managed every



day to read from the pocket Testament of one of the shipwrecked men and to have prayers together for deliverance. So men and women everywhere are turning to the words of the Bible for consolation and hope.

How far the resurgence of hell-fire, premillenarian fundamentalism is responsible for the present emphasis on Holy Scripture and how far this sinister movement is simply taking advantage of a natural yearning of troubled souls it is impossible to tell. Certainly fundamentalist religion is one of the impressive phenomena of our time. Typical of many others is the Roman Catholic lady, the wife of the head of one of the largest colleges in the country, who told me quite seriously that she is now reading the Bible with enthusiasm as she sees how the prophecies of the Old Testament are being fulfilled in exact detail before our eyes. Besides practicing her own religion she attends the meetings of one of the fundamentalist demagogues who is sowing the wind throughout the country.

The Christian educator is thus faced with an unusual interest in the Bible; with a welter of popular materials—books, pictures, radio talks, dramatic sketches, lesson leaflets—and with an amazing confusion about the reality and significance of the experiences recorded in the Old and New Testaments.

What shall be done about it? Are there some general lines of thought and work that might be suggested for guidance? Can we take heart and move ahead in a clear-cut direction? Can we make the truths of the Bible significant at this time and for this generation, helping God to reveal Himself again through its words?

It is with questions like this in mind that I venture to make several altogether concrete and practical suggestions.

1. *Let us stress in all our teaching the universal Christian Church and its cause, with the Bible as the outgrowth and record of its early fellowship and its indispensable charter for the future.* Every parish in the country needs a vivid sense of the ecumenical movement, of the World Council of Churches now in the making, and of the inescapable opposition between the Church and the secularism of pagan society. At present the movement for Christian unity is primarily a clerical concern. Only in a few places has it come alive to the laity. Ordinary people, and especially young people, must be brought to see it as quite literally the hope of the world. How is it that our leaders have obscured for them the Christian Church's insistence on the dignity and freedom of man and its equal insistence on the power of God in Christ to judge, forgive and transform human beings and human institutions? As Church members come to see

the tremendous importance of the universal Church, Church history will take on a new reality and they will see the early Church as an outgrowth of the Jewish community, made strong in Christ. This social and institutional approach to the Bible conditions and corrects the individual's apprehension of God's grace which must inevitably accompany it. Dr. Clarence Craig's *Study of the New Testament* is a fine illustration of what I have in mind and excellent for teacher-training classes. I wish there were something equally readable and enlightening on the Old Testament. For a popular introduction to ecumenical Christianity nothing is better than Professor Van Dusen's two books, *The Healing of the Nations*, written before the war, and his more recent volume, *What IS the Church Doing?* A fascinating story of the Christian Church, delightful reading for any one ten years old, or for an adult, is found in *The Church of Our Fathers*, by Roland H. Bainton.

2. *For children and young people it is important to undertake a developmental treatment of biblical study, following the general capacities and interests of each age group.* Obviously children must learn to know and love the Bible as they learn other things—gradually, through satisfying experience with it, through building meaningful associations between it and their own everyday experiences. As a possible plan, for discussion and experimentation, I would suggest something like this.

*Babies under three.* No planned teaching of the Bible. No Bible stories. Instead, a definite effort to build into their experiences of human relationships, both directly and through reading and imaginative play, the love and justice characteristic of the Christian fellowship. *Martin and Judy*, Volumes I and II, is remarkably helpful for the older ones of this age group.

*Children three, four and five years old—Nursery and Kindergarten.* Very little Bible teaching but the beginning of an attitude of regard for the Bible. Children of this age should see and perhaps handle the Bible in the Church and know that the minister reads it in public worship and that their parents read it at home. (But, do they?) They should know that it tells us about Jesus who helped and taught people, and about His friends. Christmas stories and hymns should be familiar to them and a few other stories from the Gospels. Probably nothing at all from the Old Testament. *The Bible Books for Little People* (New Testament Series), published in this country by Thomas Nelson, are excellent for this age. The Petersham's *Christ Child* is sure to be used and loved.

*Six-, seven- and eight-year-olds—Grades I, II, III.* This is the age

for much concrete detail on Palestinian life. In these grades we can expect fresh curiosity and genuine enthusiasm as we build up an understanding of the daily life of nomadic people, or of our Lord's boyhood in Nazareth. Dramatic play is almost essential for this age. Bible stories should be told for enjoyment, not for abstract ideas or to point a moral. Lobingier's *Hebrew Home Life* and *Stories of Shepherd Life*, have not been surpassed. Children will enjoy Petersham's *Old Testament Stories* which are written with great skill and delightfully illustrated. *When Jesus Was a Boy* and *When Jesus Grew Up*, in the Congregational Series, "Bible Books for Boys and Girls," are full of splendid suggestions, especially for the third grade. For the first Bible of their own, children of this age can be given *The Little Children's Bible* (Macmillan), containing selections from the Bible chosen by Quiller Couch and other scholars and first published in Cambridge, England. It is in large print and easy to hold. It opens with "Stories of Jesus" from the Gospels and introduces a series of Old Testament passages as "Stories Jesus Was Told." As children live over and enjoy experiences from the Bible, God is taken for granted. He is seen through the eyes of many different people. Questions of present faith are not thrust upon the children but are handled truthfully when they are brought up. Already children of this age can begin to use the standards of Christian fellowship as a basis for judgment.

*Nine-, ten- and eleven-year-olds—Grades IV, V and VI.* This is the time for skills in using the Bible, memory work, and considerable information. Each boys or girl should own his or her own complete Bible and should be encouraged to use it. The parent or Bible teacher should look for connections with the social studies in day school. A mastery of outstanding characters and events may reasonably be expected. Textual problems in the early narratives and the problems of miracles in Old and New Testaments should be carefully and truthfully handled. Simple research in museums, Books of Knowledge, and the Public Library can be encouraged with other individual and group enterprises. Map making is usually much enjoyed, and tests and games if they are properly handled. Teaching material on the Bible for this age group is sadly lacking. Perhaps the best lessons for the church school are the "Junior Bible Work Books," published by the Pilgrim Press, but they are far too brief and sketchy. Besides mastery of material and skill in using the Bible the teacher will work for an intelligent enthusiasm for Jesus and a developing critical insight in terms of God's concern for His world.

*Twelve, thirteen and fourteen—Junior High School.* At this age religion should be growing far more personal than in previous years. A study of New Testament Christianity is suggested, emphasizing the life of Paul and the radical and revolutionary teachings of Jesus. Grant's *The Beginnings of Christianity* (Abingdon Press) is a good textbook, or Scott's *The First Age of Christianity*, and there are several books on Paul—by Atkinson, Soares, Basil Mathews, Don Byrne and others—that have been found stimulating and useful. This period often culminates in Confirmation, or in the act of joining the Church, and its chief aim should be personal commitment to the fellowship of our Lord's disciples in the universal Christian Church. A great need for this age group is a really first-rate historical treatment of the Church. Bainton's book has the material but will probably be considered too juvenile.

*Fifteen, sixteen and seventeen—Senior High School.* Here a survey of biblical history is valuable, using perhaps Baldwin's *The Drama of Our Religion*, or the first part of Lewis Browne's *Stranger Than Fiction*, with a revision of the New Testament section, or better still, Doctor Bowie's *Story of the Bible*. Special interests can be encouraged, and a library of adult books made available. Short courses might be offered, on the Psalms as a book of worship, on certain prophets, on great ideas running through the Bible. At this age a special study of Christian doctrine is important; and it is from the point of view of doctrine, of the basic teachings of Christianity on fundamental philosophic questions, that the Bible study for this period should be undertaken. In spite of the dangers of such a generalization, it can be said with some assurance that while the note of the last period, the Junior High, was emotional commitment, the note of this period is theological understanding. That is, I believe, the correct sequence.

3. *We need to encourage more intensive and continuous study of special people, periods and books.* In the past we have been in danger of hurrying over the ground too fast and too often without leaving any clear impressions. Young people may, for instance, have a feeling that they know all about Moses—or David—or Peter—without ever having really known him at all, never having had their imaginations kindled in regard to him. Appropriation of the past takes time and reflection. Recently two excellent textbooks have come out published by the Beacon Press, on *Joseph* for the third grade, and on *Moses* for the fifth. Either of them would require at least ten or twelve weeks and might well occupy

a whole year. Second Samuel 9 to 20 would be a splendid choice for concentrated study for the fifth or sixth grades or perhaps for the Junior High School. One of the Gospels, or a single Epistle, or one of the great prophetic figures might serve as a center of study for many months.

4. *For older young people and for adults a study of the development of the great controlling ideas of the Bible is rich in possibilities.* For this Fosdick's *Guide to the Understanding of the Bible* is exceedingly helpful if used slowly and with constant reference to the biblical text. Under its stimulation series of sermons might be organized to meet the special needs of various congregations. Adult Bible classes, teacher-training groups and young people's fellowships, need to see the great biblical ideas—concepts of God, of social justice, of worship, of immortality, of individual freedom—taking shape in the consciousness of human beings throughout successive generations and expressed in beautiful and enduring form. Such a perspective is essential if this generation is to make its own significant contribution to the development of religious thought.

5. *The devotional use of the Bible is a lost art which must be recovered before God can speak again to us through the biblical records.* Canon Green has written a fine little book with the title, *The Devotional Use of the Bible*, which deserves to be much better known. To meditate on the Bible requires no elaborate technique or academic preparation but a simple discipline involving the choice of a passage, reverent attention, persistent association and the will to learn. To practice this discipline and to teach it to others is one of the greatest joys of the Christian life.

This brief catalogue of suggestions by no means exhausts the directions of needed reform in our educational treatment of the Bible. But I am convinced that these that I have mentioned are of basic importance: An approach through the struggle of the Christian movement with the pagan world; a treatment for children and young people which follows their capacities and interests; more intensive work; an emphasis on the great controlling ideas of the Old and New Testaments; and as the crown of all the others, the devotional use of the Bible.

Most of the leaders of Protestant Christian education have been trained in so-called "progressive education" under the influence of religious liberalism. They tend to look upon the general demand for a return to explicit biblical teaching with suspicion and distaste. In my opinion they should see it as a tremendous opportunity to release for this generation the infinite resources of the Christian tradition.



# The Gospel We Declare

J. M. SHAW

**W**HAT have you to declare?" is a question which at the present time is being insistently addressed to the Christian Church by a war-torn and war-tortured world. The very apocalypse of evil, the revelation of the welter of sin and misery, of lawless aggression and ruthless brutality, involved in the present world-struggle, has given a fatal blow to the secular humanistic way of thinking so prevalent in the prewar years, with its stress on man's ability in his own strength, particularly through the development of scientific knowledge and the practical application of scientific method, to bring about a better world; and has deepened man's sense of his need of a power outside and above himself for the accomplishment of his own and the world's salvation.

It is the claim of the Christian Church that it has a message to declare which is a veritable gospel or message of good news for a broken and bleeding world, a message which is the only hope of world redemption and renovation and of the coming of a new and better day among the nations. What is this message which the Christian Church is called to declare as a gospel or evangel for a needy world? Briefly and simply it may be expressed in the words of the Apostle Paul, that "where sin abounded," the sin of men and nations, "grace," the grace of God, "did much more abound," or "did abound more exceedingly" (Romans 5:20). The greatness and the wonder of this "gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20; 21) in all its New Testament or apostolic fulness, we do well to reconsider and re-emphasize at a time such as the present when as President J. S. Whale of Cambridge has so truly said, we are "rediscovering the abysmal depths of evil in the heart of man, and realizing that Public Enemy Number One is neither ignorance, nor stupidity, nor the defective social environment, but sin, which is the deep mysterious root of all these evils."<sup>1</sup>

## I

GRACE is the keynote of the Bible, not only of the New Testament but of the Old, for as John Calvin put it, the two Testaments give us not two religions, a Jewish and a Christian, but two dispensations of one re-

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<sup>1</sup> *Christian Doctrine*, The Macmillan Company, p. 37.

ligion. The Old Testament is not merely a preparation for the Christian gospel, it is itself a part of the gospel, for it gives us the beginnings of the story of divine redemption.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). The very opening words of the Bible take us away back and up to the thought of God in His creative power bringing the world, the totality of created things, into existence. And in the verses that follow the different steps or stages in God's creative working are represented, not in scientific terms—for the Bible is not concerned with science—but in properly religious terms, under the form of a picture or parable to suggest the idea not of a sudden, all-at-once, creation but of a gradual developing process, a process carried on through different steps or stages to the realization of a great final end or aim. And when we ask the writer of the Genesis story what this final end or aim of God's creative working was, the end or aim which explained and justified the whole process, alike in its beginning and in its development through different steps or stages, the answer is given in these words: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Genesis 1:26). That is to say, let us make a being akin to ourselves, a being with the power of intelligent, self-determined choice, with whom we can enter into intelligent rational fellowship, and who by the exercise of the gift of intelligent free will can enter into rational free-willed fellowship with us for the accomplishment of our purposes. Such is the scriptural representation, already here in the Genesis story, of the meaning and purpose of creation, and in particular of man's being made as the crown of creation in the very image or likeness of the great creator God Himself, a relative creator in His universe. As we may put it, more in New Testament terms, God in His father-love endowed man as His child with the gift or trust of intelligent free-willed choice, that through his willing response to His love he might in fellowship with Him fulfill His creative purposes.

Through the misuse of this great trust or gift, however—what Dante called "the dread gift of free will"—with which God had gifted him for such great ends, man "fell" from God's purpose for him in creation, and in so doing introduced dispeace and disharmony into God's universe, into his relations both with God his Father and with his fellow men his brothers. So a shadow is represented in the Genesis story as coming over God's creation, the shadow of what is called "the fall of man" through sin and sinful disobedience to God's will and purpose for him. Through this

"fall" man is represented as becoming "lost" to God's fellowship and service, and to the environment in which alone he could fulfill his true life, the life for which he was made by the very make or constitution of his being as a child of God.

The consequences of this "fall," and of this condition of "lostness" to God's purpose for his life, are represented in traditional Protestant theology as a state of "total depravity," or "corruption of man's whole nature." The classic expression of this traditional Protestant view we have in the Westminster Standards, in particular in the Westminster *Confession of Faith*, where it is declared that by this depravity or corruption of his whole nature man has become "utterly indisposed, disabled and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil" (Chap. 6, Sec. 4). The natural implication of these words is that through the "fall" man has become as bad, as depraved and corrupt, as he can be, so that no traces of good are left in his nature; that indeed "the image of God" in which he was made by nature has through sin become not only defaced but eradicated and destroyed. This is a position, however, which is contrary both to the facts of experience and to the representation of Scripture itself. So that most of the churches which have accepted the *Confession of Faith* as their "subordinate standard" have been led to modify or qualify their acceptance of the statement in question. Thus, for example—to take probably the most notable case—the Free Church of Scotland, in its Declaratory Act of 1892, issued this declaration: "In holding and teaching according to the *Confession of Faith*, the corruption of man's whole nature as fallen, this Church also maintains that there remain tokens of his greatness as created in the image of God; that he possesses a knowledge of God and of duty; that he is responsible for compliance with the moral law and with the Gospel; and that, although unable without the aid of the Holy Spirit to return to God, he is yet capable of affections and actions which in themselves are virtuous and praiseworthy." What the assertion of "total depravity" or "corruption of man's whole nature" through sin properly means, is not that every individual is as bad as he can be, but that the depravity or corruption which sin has produced in human nature extends to every part of it, so that no part is unaffected. As Principal Denney expressed it long ago, in one of his earliest works which is still well worthy of study: "Man's nature is all of a piece, and what affects it at all affects it altogether. . . . We are not constructed in water-tight compartments, one of which might be ruined while the

others remain intact; what touches us for harm, with a corrupting depraving touch at a single point, has effects throughout our entire nature."<sup>2</sup>

The motive behind the traditional Protestant statement was indeed a motive which was an altogether worthy one, viz.: to secure for God the whole glory of man's salvation. This was the motive which led some of the reformers, Luther e. g., to represent man as so passive and so dependent on God's grace in the work of salvation as to speak of him as a "stone" or a "trunk," a thing rather than a person. It is the same motive which is behind the present-day Barthian survival or reassertion of the traditional Protestant position, when sinful man is represented as through the "fall" becoming "altogether other" or "wholly other" from God, the image of God in man becoming totally lost or obliterated, so that there is said to be an "infinite qualitative difference between God and man"—a phrase taken over by Karl Barth from the Danish theologian Kierkegaard, and applied in an ethical rather than as with him in a metaphysical reference. But as actually stated, both in the earlier Protestant form, and in this later present-day Barthian form as a protest against liberal humanistic representations of the power and glory of man, the doctrine of "total depravity" would make man not only incapable of saving himself but really incapable even of being saved. For something of good, in the way at least of aspiration after a better life, must be left in man to which the offer of salvation can attach itself. No; man even in his sinning and "fall" remains, according to Scripture, a child of God, though a "lost" child. The image of God is defaced not destroyed or obliterated through his "fall." Hence even in his sin man remains the object of the Father-Creator's interest, toward whom His saving and redeeming purpose and provision go out, albeit in undeserved love and mercy.

## II

So it is that, in the scripture story, no sooner does the shadow appear on the picture through man's sinning than God, the great Father-Creator, is represented as in His sheer unmerited love or "grace"—for this is what "grace" means in scripture usage, it is love flowing out and down to those who are unworthy of it—taking the initiative and setting about the work of man's redemption. Away back in the dim dawn of the history of a primitive Semitic people, we see God working by His Spirit in the mind and heart of an early leader of that people, Abraham

<sup>2</sup> *Studies in Theology*, Seventh Edition, p. 83.

his name, under the constraint of an inner urge or impulse, which he could not himself well explain or understand but which he felt somehow to be the call of a higher mind and will than his own, moving him to leave his own land and people and to go out, as the story has it, "not knowing whither he went." As the story goes on, we see of that man and through that man, because of his faithful following of the gleam of the higher and trusting the call of the higher even in the dark, there coming into existence a new people, the people of Israel; a people whose national history began in a great deliverance wrought by God's mighty working, the deliverance from Egypt and Egyptian bondage. Till in the fullness of time, and of God's gracious redemptive working in the history of that people, we see there coming into human history a great Divine Redeemer, the Son of God becoming incarnate, living out a true human life in true human terms, the only true human life of history in the sense of a human life lived as God meant it to be lived under the twin constraints of love to God and love to man, giving himself in suffering and sacrificial service even to the length of dying on a Cross. This is the wonder of what is called the incarnation, issuing in and leading to the crucifixion. "The Word was made flesh [became incarnate] and dwelt among us . . . full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). In Him, in Jesus Christ, the fullness of God's grace appeared "bringing salvation" (Titus 2:11). The most vivid representation of the meaning of this grace of God that appeared in its fullness in Jesus Christ we have in Jesus' own recorded parable of the prodigal son, where the seeking redeeming grace of God the Father is described in these terms: "When he was yet a great way off the father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him" (Luke 15:20). He did more than wait for the penitent to return and then forgive him. He went out to meet him. He "ran" indeed to meet him. Such is the wonder of the seeking, redeeming grace of God that became incarnate in Jesus Christ, in His life and above all in His death.

This grace of God that became incarnate in Jesus Christ bringing salvation seemed indeed defeated in the Cross. The love of God revealed in the life and work of Jesus seemed when the death on the Cross took place to be after all but a weak, finite, struggling and baffled love. And had that been all, had the work of Jesus ended on the cross, there would have been no Christian gospel to preach, no Christian faith to declare. Jesus had indeed spoken as no man had ever spoken; He had done many



wonderful works, "works which none other man did." And more than what He said and did was what He was, the unique impression of His life and personality whereby He made those closest to Him feel that in Him they were face to face with one who was none other than the great promised Divine Redeemer, the Christ, the Holy One of God. But the faith evoked by the life and work of Jesus on earth in the days of His flesh, was a faith which broke into fragments under the crash of the cross. "We hoped that this had been he who should redeem Israel" (Luke 24:21). But the cross and the grave had made an end of that hope. It was the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and this resurrection viewed, as it is uniformly viewed in the New Testament, not as the act of Jesus Himself as if Jesus somehow had even in death taken to Him divine power and risen from the dead, but as the act of God the Father, a great declaratory act of God the Father, reversing and contravening the Jews' act of rejection, not only raising Him from the dead but, as Paul put it "setting him at his right hand in the heavenly sphere" (Ephesians 1:20), that is in the place of Divine power and authority—it was this, and this alone, that re-established and reinterpreted the faith initially or incipiently evoked by the life and work on earth, and sent the disciples forth with a new gospel to found the Christian Church.

For the disciples and the first believers, that is to say, the culminating or climactic manifestation of the grace of God that appeared in Jesus bringing salvation was seen not in the crucifixion, as traditional Protestant thought has too much tended to find it, but in the resurrection supervening on, interpreting and bringing to fruition the work on earth that issued in the cross. Here is the true fountal source or spring of the apostolic Christian gospel, without which we cannot explain the emergence of this gospel, and with it the rise and continuance of the Christian Church. Paul but represented the common apostolic mind when, writing to the Corinthians, he said: "If Christ has not been raised, then is our preaching vain" (*κενόν*, there is nothing in it, it has no real content) "and your faith is vain too" (*ματαιά*, it is futile, to no purpose, fruitless of effect) . . . . "ye are still in your sins" (I Corinthians 15:14-17). It is not merely—let it be noted—that for the disciples and apostles the resurrection of Jesus, viewed as the act of God the Father reversing the Jews' act of rejection, authenticated and vindicated Jesus and His life and work on earth, setting a divine seal or confirmation on the truth of His claims and on the worth of His person and work. It did that indeed, but it

did more. To lay the chief stress or emphasis here, on what is called the evidential significance of the resurrection, as traditional Protestant thought has tended to do, is to look upon it too externally, as simply an evidential appendix or appendage to Jesus' work on earth, something added on to the redemptive revelation of Jesus' life and work in the days of His flesh as a divine proof or evidence of its efficacy. But according to the apostolic representation it was much more than this. It was itself a constituent and essential part of Jesus' work of saving grace, necessary to its culmination or completion. For only through His resurrection and exaltation to a new life of supreme power and sovereignty with the redeeming virtue of His life and death on earth in Him—only so, did Jesus enter fully on His work as "Prince" and "Saviour" and becoming the life-giving principle of a new humanity, in Paul's words a "life-giving" or "life-creating" Spirit (I Corinthians 15:34, πνεῦμα ζωοποιόν), making all things new.

### III

Now through doing so, the resurrection not only vindicated and authenticated Jesus but it vindicated and authenticated also God the Father himself. It showed that that Father-love which Jesus claimed to reveal, and whose purposes He claimed to fulfill, was a love joined to power. It showed in the great test-case of history that power was on the side of holy love, able to triumph over the worst that sinful man could do to it and carry on His purposes of redeeming grace to full fruition. So the characteristic apostolic title for God came to be, "God the Father who raised Jesus Christ from the dead." The God in whom they believed and whose saving grace they declared was One whose character was once for all and fully revealed in His raising Jesus from the dead. The cross and the burial had seemed, to all appearance, to be the triumph of evil in the world, the final defeat of holy love. But by His raising Jesus from death and the grave, and exalting Him to a place of risen power, God had vindicated and authenticated that incarnate Love and by so doing had vindicated and authenticated Himself. At the great crucial moment in the world's moral history, when the world's best had suffered the world's worst, when, in Streeter's words, "the ideally good man had come to an ideally bad end," the mighty power of God, in apostolic language "the working of the strength of his might" (Ephesians 1:19), was shown to be on the side of goodness and holy love. And when this Christian faith or gospel came to be expressed, as it was soon

expressed, in credal and confessional form, it was in these terms, in the first article of the Apostles' Creed, "I believe in God the Father Almighty" (παντοκράτωρ), able to overrule all things for the accomplishment of His fatherly purposes.

How the resurrection took place we may not understand. Here, as it has been finely said, is "the land where the great mists lie, but also where the great rivers spring" (Principal D. S. Cairns in an address on "The Risen Christ," in *Christ and Human Need*, p. 177). It is a stupendous creative act of the living God, comparable to the act of the first creation itself, a new influx from the world of creative spirit opening a new redemptive epoch in the history of a world of sin and need. To quote the more recent words of another outstanding Old-Country theological scholar, President J. S. Whale, of Cheshunt College, in addressing the students of the University of Cambridge: "Here is the mightiest of the mighty acts of God, foreign to the common experience of man, inscrutable to all his science, astounding to believer and unbeliever alike. But here and only here is an activity of God, wrought out in this world of pain, sin and death, which is the key pattern for the world's true life, . . . (and) the sure promise that life according to this pattern is eternal."<sup>3</sup> Here, in the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus, is the true ground of our Christian optimism. "God raised up Jesus from the dead and gave him glory," says the Apostle, "that our faith and hope might be in God" (I Peter 1:21). The fact that in this groaning travailing world of sin and misery Jesus was raised from the dead, and given power and "glory," is the proof that we are not living in a world which God has forsaken, but in a world in which, its accumulated sin and misery notwithstanding, He is working out His creative redemptive purposes.

So it is that the resurrection of Jesus is the very center of the Christian view of history, shedding a transfiguring light back on all nature and history before Him and throwing forward a transforming radiance on our whole outlook for the future. In it lies the promise of a new humanity, of a "new order" as we say so often in these days, a "new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness" (II Peter 3:13). It is indeed the beginning of this new order, not only its pledge and its promise but its first fruits. The new order is here. It is not a mere promise or prospect, it is already begun. "Now is Christ risen" (I Corinthians 15:20). Something stupendous has happened. Something has

<sup>3</sup> *Christian Doctrine*, p. 73.

gained a foothold on this darkened scene of history that has changed the whole outlook. And this something may be thus expressed: The creative redemptive power of God in grace, the very nature of which is to be and to do above and beyond (*supra*) what we ourselves can do, suprahuman, supranatural, the greatness of which power has been most fully manifested in the resurrection of Jesus, has now through His resurrection and exaltation become a power within (*intra*) man, the "above" and "beyond" becoming the "within," raising man to a new level of life and power, and so described as a "quickening" "life-giving" spirit.

This is why the burden of apostolic preaching was "Jesus and the resurrection" (Acts 17:18), and why the resurrection had that primary and determining place in the thought and life of the early Church which it has never really been given in later times, but which the whole world situation in which we find ourselves at the present time is calling us to recover and re-emphasize. Here lie the springs of that Christian faith and energizing hope with which we are called to meet the present situation. The world may look like a devil-ridden world, with the forces of diabolism surging abundantly through it. But upon our faithless depression there breaks the message of the superabounding grace of God in the cross and then in the resurrection of Jesus with its *sursum corda* call, "Lift up your hearts." If this is what has happened, and happened not in dream or in fancy but in actual facts of history; if the almighty creative God is in the field after such a fashion; if in the cross of Jesus we see the length of His gracious redemptive love-travail for a sinning suffering world, and if in the resurrection we see the measure of the power made available through His grace or unmerited love for the world's redemption and deliverance, then what can we do but believe and hope? "If God be for us," in such a way and to such a length, "who or what can be against us?" (Romans 8:31). "I am certain," said Paul, "that neither death nor life, . . . neither the present nor the future, no powers of the Height or of the Depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to part us from God's love in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39; Moffatt's Translation).

#### IV

Such is the gospel which the Christian Church is called to declare, and to witness to as a power in the life of men and nations. It is a gospel to which belief in the essential dignity and worth of man, of the individual man, is integral, as being made "in the image of God" for His

fellowship and service; "fallen" indeed through his pride and sinful forgetfulness and repudiation of God's claims on his life, but even in his fallen sinful estate of a child of God, to whom God's love goes out, and for whom God in His forgiving restoring grace has made available a power which can redeem and deliver his life in all its relationships from the power of sin and evil. As such it is a gospel which includes all men, men of every race and nation, Jew and Gentile, Aryan and non-Aryan; all men brothers, because all children of a heavenly Father for whom in their sin and need Christ died and has been raised again, and never to be exploited or treated by State or Society as a tool or chattel, a mere means to ends beyond themselves. It is a gospel which involves ultimately the transcending of all mere isolationism or separatism in individual or national life, and the bringing into existence of a world-wide community or fellowship, a fellowship of love and service, in which each exists for all and all for each. For the realization of this the whole creation "groaneth and travaileth together" (Romans 8:22). And this, which Paul represents in his Christian philosophy of history as the ultimate goal of God's working, is to be realized through the enthroning of Christ and Christ's way of life, which is the way of love and service, in all the relationships of life, national and international, to the glory of God the Father.

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# The Eschatological Element in Contemporary Preaching

CLIFFORD ANSGAR NELSON

**I**T IS a significant symptom of our times that in the vocabulary of religious thought the word "eschatology" has been given a key position. One is apt to stumble on it in the most unlikely places. Without some concept of the modern meanings of things eschatological even the general reader will find himself at a loss in the perusal of the current literature. There was a time when eschatology was the designation of a final chapter in dogmatics and had a strictly formal relation to the subject of our Lord's second coming, the judgment and the end of all things. The word comes from the Greek source *eschaton* which simply means "last," and it has traditionally denoted a consideration of the final consummation. Today its scope has been widened to include not only the idea of the destiny of man and the world, but the whole of the relation of eternity to time and all that that implies.

How shall we explain the concentration of emphasis upon the eschatological in theology in recent years? It is not just by accident that we have come to a new appreciation of this element that for most of the last century was hidden in a few formal paragraphs at the end of the orthodox theologies and neglected as an obsolete category of thought by the more liberal intellectuals in theology. Several factors can be suggested that have contributed to the uncovering of this vein of thought.

First the crisis of our times has made us aware of certain reaches of the New Testament revelation that in more serene days seemed remote and unintelligible. In times of comparative prosperity and cultural growth, the apocalyptic element in the Scriptures seems irrelevant and irritating, but these are not normal times. Ours is an apocalyptic age. With the whole basis of civilization in imminent peril of being undermined, our thought is naturally concerned with the future destiny of man and of his relation to the eternal Kingdom of God. The optimism of the last century with its evolutionary view of history seems the obsolete concept today, and we are no longer so sure that the apocalyptic element in the New Testament is irrelevant. Instead it speaks to our present mood and from it we gain a philosophy of history that inspires hope and cheer amid

the despair of men's minds. The sensation that Oswald Spengler made in the years directly after the first World War with his revolutionary philosophy of the morphology of history, was symptomatic that the climate of thinking had changed. Amidst the crash of a familiar world about us we again see a depth of relevance in the biblical concern with judgment.

Also, irrational elements have been let loose in our world that require more profound explanations than the simple monistic rationalism and materialism of the nineteenth century can offer. The orderly universe of law and mathematics that seemed like a rich discovery to a former age has been invaded by hidden and demonic forces that apocalyptically seek to wrest the kingdoms of this world into their own grasp. We are no longer so sure that the dualism of Jesus' view of a kingdom of Satan in conflict with the Kingdom of God belongs to an outmoded demonology. There are hidden, mysterious and irrational depths of evil in my own soul and in the soul of humankind, which demand redemption from a transcendent and eternal God. When our faith in humanism wanes, it is not strange that we discover new dimensions of profundity in the New Testament pattern of eschatology which make real the nature of the intervention of the divine into the sphere of human struggle.

Then it must not be forgotten that the new interest in eschatology takes its rise from new discoveries and methods in theological science. The finding and translation in the last half of the nineteenth century of thirty or more Jewish apocalypses which had hitherto been unknown created a sensation. The recently explored form-criticism method of New Testament exegesis has also given a new methodology for the treatment of the eschatological materials. The conclusions have revolutionary possibilities for textual criticism. The rise in the late nineteenth century of the new science of comparative religion has also had its influence, as well as the more thorough study of Jewish and Hellenistic influences on the early Christian faith. All these together raised the question of what was the unchanging, permanent element in the gospel.

Further, a new departure in the study of the physical sciences has its pertinence. The new physics of Minkowski and Eddington and Einstein struggling with the concept of time, has had bearing on the theologians' concept of time and eternity. The Bergsonian philosophy of intuition and creative evolution and the implications of these new ideas for religion has had direct influence on the validity of mysticism and personalism and the meaning of revelation and the invasion of time by eternity.

What bearing does this have on our preaching to the generation in which we are placed as interpreters of the gospel? What use shall we make of the eschatological element in the New Testament in the pulpit, if any? What shall the preacher do with the considerable element in the New Testament lessons that deal with the judgment and the final consummation? Where shall our exegesis begin? Shall we conclude that these bold visions are unintelligible to our scientific and enlightened generation, and leave them to the millenarians to lure the populace with their love for the sensational and bizarre? Shall we spiritualize the eschatological and make it worthful myth and symbol of more basic concepts, a kind of Oriental poetry that uses pictures to convey everlasting realities? Or whither shall we turn? There are various avenues along which the preacher may journey.

#### I. THE PREACHER MAY ENTIRELY DISREGARD THE ESCHATOLOGICAL ELEMENTS IN THE GOSPEL

This is the most common attitude of the pulpit today. It is the easiest way out for the troubled preacher who finds the eschatological among the hard sayings and finds difficulty in fitting it into today's ordering of life. It is simple then to gloss over all reference to this area of religion and stay by the more familiar patterns in the ever-fresh message of the Christian faith.

But this is not the largest reason why most preachers disregard the eschatological dimension in their preaching. Mental laziness and haziness do not explain the omission. Rather, it is the great tradition of nineteenth-century liberal thought that has set the pattern of exposition. That century can be said to have centered its theological labor on the field of ethics. Schleiermacher with his psychological approach to religion was its greatest theologian. Immanuel Kant was its great prophet. Kant was neither an academic theologian nor a preacher with parish and pulpit, but his keen delineation of law and order in the world of nature, and his postulate of the moral imperative as the highest nobility of man made him the teacher of theologians par preference. More dominant than any other churchman in the last half of the century, was Albrecht Ritschl. To him goes the credit of rescuing Christian faith in a time when positivism wanted to strangle the Christian religion by accusing it of being wishful subjective thinking and intellectually and morally disrespectful. Ritschl alone was able to make an impression and do so by using the same argu-

ments that the positivists used and proving that religion was indispensable for the realization of their ethical ideals. The result was a theological counterpart to Kant's philosophical and historical scholarship. The Christian religion could be made ethically legitimate. Its central value judgments were ethical in character. Its teacher and founder was the wise sage of all time whose religion was an ethical imperative to every age. The religious task was to reveal Jesus the Master Teacher whose Kingdom could and must be built in this world. Ritschl's program was the awakening of a theological revival. It gave impulse to a prodigious amount of scholarly research which came back with rich gifts to substantiate and strengthen the central ethical thesis. Down along all possible pathways the minds of men went in quest of the historical Jesus. An intense study of the milieu in which the Master lived would yield the figure of a Jesus who could be pressed into the ethical moulds of the prevailing culture. Someone used the figure of peeling the onion until the core was left pure and primitive. In the paring down process to reach the inner essence, all the vestments of nineteen centuries of Christian thought must be removed, until even Paul was to be withstood as a falsifier of the original gospel. And from the Hebrew culture of the gospel age, of course, all eschatological thought was simply an historical product that had no direct bearing on the Jesus who spoke ethically and religiously as no man ever spake. We recognize some of the slogans of the period, "Back to Jesus," "Not Theology But Life," "Jesus, Not Christianity." Perhaps most well known of all the popular treatments of this view was Adolf Harnack's *The Essence of Christianity*.

But then came Albert Schweitzer! Instead of being able to discard the eschatological element in the gospel it became for him the key by which the whole mystery of Jesus' life and person and teaching could be solved. In 1906 Schweitzer startled the theological world with his volume, *Von Reimarus zu Wrede*, translated in English under the title, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, in which he presented Jesus from the viewpoint of a thoroughgoing apocalypticism. His conclusion was that Jesus in His mission and person was entirely conditioned by the current religious ideas in our own day. As far as Schweitzer was concerned, the historical Jesus that had so painstakingly been built up by a generation of scholars was one who had never lived, a pure figment of the zealous imagination of those who had created Him. Instead, the real Jesus was a common Jewish rabbi who had become a fanatic apocalyptic mystic,

living under the illusion that He was the Messiah and that in a short time He would return to the earth as the Son of Man in all His glory. When Jesus was disappointed in the delay of God's coming to establish the kingdom (Matthew 10:23—according to Schweitzer—is the first date in Christian history) he determined on the course of His death to force the hand of God. Now was the time for deeds, not words, and Jesus went to the cross to bring in the final events in the natural life of the world. But the Master was forsaken of His God and crushed by the cosmic eschatological machinery of His own imagination. With His last cry on the cross, the eschatological content of His gospel died with Him. Therefore, the whole eschatological pattern can be dropped from our thinking and Jesus the simple and good man is what we have left. He is the ethical Teacher who lost His life in mistaken fanaticism, to be sure, but still speaks to our age as the continuing Prophet of a great Old Testament tradition of spiritual religion. So, through strange and devious pathways we are back again to the ethically centralized Christianity of Ritschl and Harnack. But with what diminished religious values! The whole Christology of classic Christianity is shattered and denied. Not even Schweitzer himself can build his life on what is left of the historic revelation in Christ. His refuge becomes an ethical metaphysic based on a beautiful philosophy of reverence for life and a piety that comes from thinking. Certainly all of us have an enormous admiration for this brilliant thinker, the versatile Leonardo da Vinci of our own age, who is ready to leave all and go to Equatorial Africa to demonstrate to himself the validity of his philosophy of world affirmation. We give the hand of Christian brotherhood to the missionary doctor of Lambarene. We have seen the spirit of Jesus at work in his life. But his eschatological theology leaves many of us unmoved except with sadness in its onesided treatment of the life of our blessed Lord.

## II. THE PREACHER MAY LOSE HIMSELF WHOLLY IN THE FASCINATION OF THE ESCHATOLOGICAL AT THE EXPENSE OF OTHER CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

But few religious values have been conserved or strengthened by this homiletic route. I am thinking now, not of the thoroughgoing eschatology of a Schweitzer which brought him to a negation of the place of all eschatology in Christian thought. But instead, at the other end of the pendulum, it is that curious person, the preacher whose mind seems to



remain in the realm of apocalyptic in all his preaching. If we are to be true to the American scene both of the past century and of today, we must reckon with the millenarian who comes round to the second coming of our Lord and the future hope of the Christian faith in almost every utterance. The protagonists of millenarianism have taken advantage of radio and printing press and every means of propaganda to spread their message with the utmost zeal. Their heresy is simply that of spiritual eccentricity, using the word in its original sense. They are off the center of emphasis in the scriptural way of salvation. By no stretch of the imagination can it be said that the future hope is at the heart of the revelation of Christ. Nineteen centuries of Christian theology and experience cannot be wrong in finding the needle of the compass pointing to the appearing of our Lord in His incarnation as the very center of history and the determining of our understanding of grace and faith.

The millenarians place themselves under suspicion because of the divisiveness and sectarianism of their message. In almost every historical denomination and in countless sects and cults they band themselves into prophetic schools and stand aloof in misunderstanding of other Christians. They do not speak the same language as their brethren in the church. They count themselves to be keepers of occult mysteries that are withholden from the uninitiated. The rest of us simply do not read the same magazines with their cryptic apocalyptic predictions.

### III. THE PREACHER MAY MAKE USE OF THE ESCHATOLOGICAL AS AN ETERNAL AND TIMELESS SYMBOL OF TRANSCENDENT REALITIES WITHIN THE DIVINE SPHERE OF ACTION

After Schweitzer's bankrupting of the view of Jesus which had been so painstakingly built up, it was natural that a reaction should come. Too many of the great traditions of the historic faith had gone into the discard, in the resulting view of his thoroughgoing eschatology. The time was ripe for a trumpet sound to be heard in the camp of the theologians. It belongs to history now, that the theological revival came this time, not from the academic theologians; but from a group of preachers in postwar Europe who were struggling to make real to common lay folk the tremendous seriousness of the Word of God to their own time. Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Friedrich Gogarten were among the little circle who began writing and speaking in such a way that their words were heard to the farthest corners of the Christian world. In Karl Barth, theology was aware that a prophet had arisen with whom one had to reckon. And

eschatology was again one of the principal concepts in the new vocabulary. In his commentary on the Book of Romans, Karl Barth writes these words:

"Christentum das nicht ganz und gar und restlos Eschatologie ist, hat mit Christus ganz und gar und restlos nichts zu tun."<sup>1</sup>

(Christianity which is not completely and thoroughly Eschatological, has absolutely nothing in common with Christ.)

In other words, the "dialectic" or "crisis" theology of Barth was also to be a thoroughgoing eschatology. But in an entirely different sense from that of Schweitzer. Whereas, for Schweitzer, the eschatological framework of the teaching of Jesus was something that belonged simply to the contemporary and ephemeral, and must be removed with radical surgery if one is to arrive at the eternal, unchanging element in the Word of God in Christ; for Barth, the Word of God has little to do with history and time. It is an eternal Word, eternal as God is, and removed from the arena of physical and temporal history. There is an infinite qualitative, metaphysical difference between time and eternity, between man and the divine, between the historical world and the suprahistorical sphere of God's activity. The Word that is proclaimed meets man always as judgment, and crisis, upon everything human and the crisis in civilization's destiny today is God's Word to our time. It is the spiritual and timeless Christ who is become contemporary, because He is of all time, the pre-existent Logos and the continuing Christ who meets me and my generation. We recognize immediately the philosophical and religious debt that Barth and his school are under to Kierkegaard as they find their contemporaneity with Christ in the leap of faith. The implications for the homiletic message become clear. The eschatology of Jesus is not an announcement of a final fulfillment in history, but a word of challenging judgment for today. The final judgment, the Parousia, resurrection and eternity are not to be thought of in terms of a future fulfillment, and the end of time; they are instead timeless symbols of the present meeting with the living God. To borrow a figure from Paul Althaus, another of the German theologians who thinks in these categories:

"It is not only the last wave of time that beats upon the shore of eternity, and judgment, and fulfillment. Each lies in the twilight of Romans 13:12—'The night is far spent, the day is at hand.' It is thus not necessary to take the scriptural plans for the future too seriously; they are parables and symbols that have profound meanings and challenge to awakening, but they are not last things. Not myths

<sup>1</sup> Karl Barth—*Römerbrief*, p. 298, quoted by Folke Holmstrom in *Det Eschatologiska Motivets*, Stockholm, 1933.

in the sense that they are fantastic or unreal, but realities that make this moment significant and crucial. Time is to be thought of religiously, not as horizontal continuity that runs from past to future, but vertically so that it runs from this moment into God's eternity."<sup>2</sup>

The foregoing brief summary is enough to indicate that this theology is dealing with an entirely different circle of ideas from that of the generation preceding. There are profundities here of metaphysics and historical philosophy that stimulate the scholar and the preacher. No discussion of ethics is today complete without coming to terms with this whole area. Reinhold Niebuhr can scarcely be called a Barthian in the sense of a disciple of the school, but his whole outlook is colored by its interpretations. He rejects its main thesis of the supertemporal fulfillment of life, but he makes use of its ideology in supporting his thesis of the impossibility of any human or this-worldly fulfillment of the ethics of Jesus. In his Rauschenbusch lectures he speaks of the apocalyptic teaching of Jesus as "a mythical expression of the impossible possibility under which all human life stands." In his view, Jesus, as well as Paul, was under an historical illusion in expecting the Messianic Kingdom in the immediate future. But this apocalypticism is not the source of Jesus' rigorous ethic, not thus an interim-ethic in the sense of Schweitzer, but rather the consequence of trying to state and think in human and temporal terms what can only be stated mythically. Our Lord may have been mistaken in His hope of present fulfillment, but His intention and intuition were correct. The ethical demands of Jesus are incapable of fulfillment in the present existence of man and so, "to place them in the end of time is to remain true to the genius of prophetic religion and state mythically what cannot be stated rationally."<sup>3</sup>

Amos Wilder in his recent volume on *Eschatology and Ethics in the Teaching of Jesus*, arrives at a similar conclusion. He is sure that the ethics of Jesus stand independently without having to refer to the eschatology for sanctions. They have their basis in the nature of God and His will. The form of the eschatological message was symbolic of the historic crisis of His time, and was an imaginative representation of the nature of the new age which must come. It is creative eschatology, ethically inspired, a body of profound and significant myth, the only adequate symbols at hand to convey in realistic terms the tremendous historical situation.

And so we could continue with the various interpretations that make

<sup>2</sup> Paul Althaus—*Die Letzten Dinge*—p. 174, quoted by Folke Holmstrom.

<sup>3</sup> Reinhold Niebuhr—*An Interpretation of Christian Ethics*, Harper & Bros., pp. 56-68.

use of eschatology in symbolic fashion. They arouse the imagination and make serious the word of the preacher, whether they deal in transcendental idealistic terms such as the Barthians use, or whether they have their starting point in a study of the ethical issues involved in Jesus' teaching.

The Barthian emphasis on the meaningfulness of eternity in the midst of time, has introduced a dimension of depth into the theology of Europe that has been exceedingly suggestive to the preacher. Our American criticism of Barth, that he is impractical and otherworldly and unsocial in introducing the seriousness of the "beyond" rather than concentrating on the outer problems of today's social and political world has perhaps been entirely too hasty and superficial. Some of us are coming to have a private feeling that Karl Barth's "crisis" theology has been a tremendous conservator of the Christian faith in Europe's confusion. The elements in the German church that have refused to bow their knees to the Baal of the state, are precisely those groups that have been most deeply influenced by the theology of crisis. It may one day be seen that this renewal in theology was providentially timed to meet the needs of our own day. Its eschatological character has not meant a removal from the arena of activity in the world's life, but it has thrust men out into the thick of things and prepared them for defeat, suffering, death and misery as they have stood fast to witness for the gospel. Adolf Keller in his *Christian Europe Today* has said that we cannot understand the religious situation on the continent without reckoning with this eschatological faith, which is so full of reality to the church abroad. He closes his chapter on "the arsenal of theology" with this paragraph:

"This [eschatological faith] does not mean passive resignation, but the emphatic certainty that defeat is not final, that God's victory is ahead, the victory of His justice, His kingdom, His love, the victory which faith anticipates in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The religious life of present-day Europe, facing death every day, cannot be understood without a glimpse of this eschatological light in Christian piety."<sup>4</sup>

#### IV. EVERY CHRISTIAN PREACHER MUST FIND SOME SATISFYING INTERPRETATION OF THE NATURE AND THE GOAL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Is the Kingdom of God a fulfilled reality; or is it a present concern with this world; does it refer to the culmination of history in another

<sup>4</sup> Adolf Keller—*Christian Europe Today*, Harper & Bros., p. 149.

eon, or is it a combination of past, present and future in its arrival? Is it completely this-worldly, entirely other-worldly, or a combination of both? These are practical questions that are determinative of the task and the message of each of us in the ministry, be we humble or great. They are eschatological questions that we all must face. There are no glib or easy answers that lie on the surface in isolated New Testament passages. The answers will come out of one's total view of eschatology. Nowhere is the need for a unifying theology in the pulpit more apparent than here. Each of us must seek for himself such a unity. Richard Niebuhr in his invaluable study of the *Kingdom of God in America* has shown how in the history of the Church in our nation the prevailing idea of the kingdom has too often been determined by the political and economic and cultural conditions of the decade rather than by a point of reference outside this world from which the gospel may judge and guide the era. Therein lies the temptation of the pulpit always in its proclaiming of the Eternal Word of God in human terms; and perhaps the peculiar temptation of the American pulpit. We have been too close to the stormy adolescent period of the growth of a great nation to appreciate the eschatological verdict of eternity which still says, "Except ye repent ye shall all in like manner perish." Perhaps in the crisis of today we are seeing better than before that our American dream has partaken too much of a superficial apocalyptic materialism rather than the essential prophetic righteousness that belonged to the eschatological ethic of our Lord.

The idea of the Kingdom of God is no simple concept for the theologian or the preacher of today. It is the bearer of a wealth of treasure in its richness of meaning. Like the Master Himself, the preacher of today will find himself emphasizing now one, now another of its many implications. Faithfulness to scriptural realism, will find the homiletic pattern stimulated not only by the roots of the Kingdom in the first thirty years of the Christian era, nor only by the direct challenge of the Kingdom in the hour which now is, but will also see the continuing process of history as an unfoldment of the Kingdom of God's sovereignty until the far-away goals are consummated. It speaks of yesterday in its high moments of revelation, it beats upon the portals of today with insistent and urgent call, but it belongs also to desire and aspiration and eternal hope.

There is no other course for the preacher of today than to gird his loins and spend his mental labor in making for himself a "thoroughgoing" eschatology that will be intellectually respectable, scripturally honest,



spiritually sound and relevant to contemporary needs. Preaching that is not eschatological today cannot satisfy the hungry needs of a generation trembling before the awesome realities of a terrifying world revolution.

The eschatological motif is a vivid color in the classic Christian portrait of God that cannot be denied, and that it must be reckoned with in the preacher's arsenal of ideas is inevitable. It remains what it has always been, a contributing "leitmotif" in the symphony of thought concerning God's ways with man. That it is continuously legitimate and valid and illuminative for our understanding of the Eternal is my only contention.

"Eschatology is to the Gospel not as it has been for much Christian theology—an addendum, an appendix, a doctrine alongside of a good many others without any very intimate relation to them—but it is the background against which the whole is to be viewed. Faith in its totality is eschatologically conditioned. That Kingdom of God, around which the Gospel message centers, is not contained within the limits of earthly existence, it is not to be identified with any ideal state, does not belong to the extension of the present into the future, but on the contrary in its whole structure, it is an otherworldly, transcendent greatness which when it draws near with salvation and judgment comes from above only through God's unfathomable, creative, loving will."<sup>5</sup>

1. *The preacher today need not be afraid to make use of the classic biblical eschatological ideas.* It is not realistic to say that our generation cannot understand them. Just as various generations have evaluated various portions of Scripture with different emphasis, so I am convinced that our age runs parallel with the New Testament era enough to appreciate its reference to the philosophy of history. Just as the Reformation era laid hold with serious intent upon the meaning of the Pauline concepts of Romans and Galatians as particularly pertinent, and the age of the growth of social ideas found special validity in James and the ethical concepts of the Sermon on the Mount, so our own age may perhaps find more meaningful than ever the underlying principles in the apocalyptic sections of the New Testament. There are profound reaches that are hidden to the naïve literalist, but there are eternal verities behind the apocalyptic language that faith must lay hold of. So much we must learn from Barth; that our generation must again become conversant with the call of repentance and judgment in the New Testament, if it is to wake up out of the sleep of death.

2. *The pulpit today must take seriously the Hebrew-Christian philosophy of history.* It is not the feverish millenarians alone who

<sup>5</sup> Gustav Aulen—*Den Kristna Guds-bilden*, pp. 35-36.

falsify the issues of destiny, but the secular eschatologies and utopias of Marxism, Fascism, Nazism, materialism and a dozen other "isms" are making serious demands on the ideology of the common man. If men will not have the Christian faith, they will grasp with wistful insistence at some other faith to feed their hunger for hope. The throne room in the human heart will not remain vacant. It remains for the Christian pulpit as a compelling demand, to direct our generation to a Christian view of the regnancy of God over the chaos of today. Human messianisms and utopias are symptomatic of a false faith in human nature. Man has a deep hunger and hope for a kind of new creature, a restored human nature that can satisfy his need for completion and perfection. Eschatology in a Christian sense wishes to state that the new world and the new human race will come and must come, but the only one who can renew the world and create a new creature is Jesus Christ.

3. *The Christian pulpit today must not isolate too severely the ethical and the eschatological.* What Christ hath joined together, let not man put asunder. The man who stood before his townsmen in the synagogue at Nazareth and proclaimed that the great social program of Isaiah 61 was to be inaugurated and that the Scripture had found fulfillment in their presence, was not rejected and crucified primarily because of his ethical preaching, but rather because he dared to place his ministry within the eschatological Messianic context of the prophetic Old Testament tradition. Ethics and eschatology are inextricably interwoven. The true conception of the Kingdom of God will not only include the gradual development of truth in the orderly processes like those of the mustard seed and the leaven, but will also include the apocalyptic principle where God may intervene like a thief in the night and with the swiftness of the lightning. Even scientific evolution is today not uncongenial to the laws of progress and regress, of quiet unfoldment and revolutionary change.

4. *The Christian pulpit today must not forget the preaching of hope.* The underlying vision of the Book of Revelation, with its phantasmagoria of imagery, so much of which is unintelligible to our day because it was contemporary to the day in which it is written, is that Christ is on the throne, that the Lord Omnipotent reigneth and that in His hands are the issues of our human destiny. Without that vision the Christian today might be reduced to darkling thoughts of withering despair, but having so precious a light, he holds a shining torch in the midst of the darkest night.

The preaching of the hope of immortality, and the richness of the

life everlasting is one of the great areas of eschatology that belongs to our preaching and must not be forgotten. But immortality for the individual is always a part of that larger triumph, the victory of the Kingdom of God, the ultimate victory of God and Spirit over all the defeats of our humanity. Therein lies its eschatological nature and it derives its validity in reference to the whole of faith's activity.

5. *Eschatological preaching will make real the New Testament mood of expectancy and preparedness.* It is characteristic of all great, creative figures in history that they seem to foreshorten the time, because the task of the moment is so urgent. That is true of the Old Testament prophets, of Paul, of Augustine, of Luther and Calvin, of Cromwell and Wesley, of Lincoln or William Temple; of all who speak to a moment of crisis in history. The moment must be grasped, for it is decisive. Can it not be said that the mood of immediate expectancy in the gospel is an expression of the urgency of the call of Christ? The present moment is urgent. We must be vigilant and watchful for fresh disclosures of His presence. Any victory over the world will be His victory. The time which is assigned to us is a time of grace which God has granted us, a time for repentance, for growth in faith and love, a time of active waiting when the lamps of faith and hope must not sputter and die. Our Lord left us with no calculations for determining the end of time, but He did urge that time was meaningful and must be redeemed with spiritual alertness and eager growth in righteousness. The eschatology of Jesus made Him not a feverish apocalyptic, but gave Him a quiet calm and patience in the face of the most tumultuous events. He had time to wait for the patience of God in the arena of history. The Christian Church must not stand gazing into the heavens, or speculating on the unrevealed future, but must call her people to be on tiptoe in alertness waiting for the power which God would give to her in her world task. Her central sacrament of the Eucharist expresses the three tenses of the faith; it is an act of remembrance; it makes vivid the vital, real and contemporary presence of the Christ, and it expresses the hope of the final consummation of His Kingdom. The preacher can forget none of these in his ministry as prophet and priest in the community of worship and prayer. "Go ye—proclaim his death until he shall come."

# Theological Perspective

BERNARD E. MELAND

THE president of a New England college recently said to me, "When are some of you theologians going to give us a theology as clear and as simplified as William Newton Clarke's *Outline of Christian Theology*?" Instinctively I replied, "When our affirmations are as clear to us as his were to him." To get to the bottom of the matter, however, I think I should have said, "When our perspective in theology is as sure and indisputable as it was during the last decade of the nineteenth century." For the affirmations of a theology stream forth as the rays of the sun, once the center of thought is determined. Clarke's theology possessed such a unity. He was confident that the God of the universe had been disclosed in the historical character of Christ. Thus whatever doctrine he proposed to examine, he viewed in the light of *such a God*. That center was crystalline clear. One felt upon reading his *Outline* that once you were at that center, affirming ideas rushed out in all directions. Clarke did not need to argue his readers into following him toward his conclusions; he had only to bring them to his center. The light of that luminous point streamed forth and illumined all other issues.

What William Newton Clarke and others of his day possessed as a guiding principle in theology we, today, lack. The extreme straining of our thinking, the perplexed look upon our faces as we grope through the dark of our minds for sure ideas, not to mention the troubled look of our listeners, is evidence enough that the central light is not there. Here and there sure voices speak out boldly as if this light had come to them; but the divergence of views, and their much speaking to substantiate them, betray the uncertainty of their vision. I have sat through hour after hour of such interchange of thinking during recent months, only to be impressed again and again with the conviction that today our light is half darkness.

Now I am one who is not disturbed by this theological *dimout*. It is a condition of thought we must endure and live through, so long as we share in the accumulative confusion of our age. For theology to assume a clarity it does not possess, simply because our contemporaries demand it, or because the publishers approve it, would be to reduce Christian

thought to the level of marketable goods. More serious still, such premature formulation of the tenets of faith would necessarily exclude from it the as yet unripened thought of related fields, which only now is beginning to converge toward a common spiritual center.

Protestant theology, as defined by the Reformation thinkers, both in Lutheran and Calvinistic form, has long labored under the handicap of having reached a fixed state before the new era of human thought in the sixteenth century had been adequately appraised and its basic ideas appropriated. Both Calvinists and Lutherans joined medieval Catholicism in resisting the Copernican revolution, only to temper their dogmatism at a later date with an awkwardly reconstructed apologetics. We are on the verge of repeating this mishap. For at the very hour when the flood-tide of new insight is again gathering, threatening a break through, which may give new orientation to human thought, as fundamentally as did the treatise of Copernicus and the experiments of Galileo, impatient theologians are rushing back to an earlier time to import a mood of certainty which does not belong to our age, and which we have no right to assume. And in this effort to attain quick theological results, we may very well detour Christian thinking from the creative, intellectual currents of our time. A new impasse between Christianity and the enlightened areas of culture might then be inevitable.

The confusion that clouds our vision today is not just the outcome of a devitalized faith, or the counterpart of despair; it is the result, in part, of new intellectual energy which has caused a break through in many areas of contemporary thinking. Let one meditate upon the change in thought climate since the day when William Newton Clarke wrote his *Outline of Christian Theology*, and one will begin to appreciate the difficulty of writing such a theology today. Clarke's book came at a time when the physical sciences, with the help of philosophical idealism, had resolved the major tensions between spirit and matter. Evolution had been made the handmaid of historical study, and the results were illuminating beyond expectation in all fields that inquired into the story of ancient man. This clear exposition of historical meaning gave to theology a key which not only opened the doors of historical research in Christian thought, but which, for the time being, *locked* the doors of other domains, such as metaphysics and mystical venturing. Albrecht Ritschl and his colleagues in Germany consciously turned away from metaphysics and mysticism and decried their influence upon earlier theology. William



Newton Clarke, and Horace Bushnell before him, simply ignored these other reaches as being unprofitable forms of inquiry, and unnecessary when so simple a thesis as *God was in Christ*, served to illumine the Christian faith in its historical setting. Pragmatism, born of a similar mood in philosophy, reinforced this method of thinking, especially its negation of metaphysics and mysticism. Thus there arose a period of clarification in Christian thought which has hardly been equalled before or since; a period when an *Outline of Christian Theology* seemed as natural and persuasive as a declaration of the orderliness of nature, and the story of man's progress in his climb toward civilization.

Our time has been the complete revocation of this simplified world view. Even while Clarke was writing his *Outline of Christian Theology*, experiments in physics were preparing the way for a new day in science, although the results were not to become generally known until our own time. Since then, metaphysics and mysticism have again broken through, sweeping all simple forms of empiricism before them. Gestalt psychology has widened the horizon of psychology, and the communal pattern of thought has set sociological and political thought in a new perspective. Two world wars have crushed the social dreams of valiant idealists and have sent the concept of *progress* spinning through space, a guiding star of another day, fallen and devoid of light.

In the midst of this deep confusion, which is at once charged with despair and yet so full of promise, we have our opportunity to create a new theology for our age. We are justified in tempering our despair with such renewal of confidence in the Christian faith as a re-examination of our tradition will provide; but it would be folly to seek this solace as a substitute for pursuing patiently the enlargement of religious vision to which our predicament gives promise. That there is a "glorious new day" for Christian theology before us, I have no doubt; but that time is not yet! We have work to do before it arrives. Let us not delay its coming by assuming a premature pose of certainty, or, by borrowing the light of another day, assume that the new day is already here.

What, then, is the nature of the theological task that is before us? It is a many-sided one, requiring workers on many fronts. Our very confusion suggests a kind of richness of ideas, pressing for clarification and synthesis. At no time could it be said more aptly that there is room for thinkers of varying temperaments and gifts. In part the task is one of re-examining what George Thomas has called *the primary intuitions of*

the Christian faith. In part the task is epistemological, examining the relation between faith and knowledge, as well as the claim that religious knowledge goes beyond discursive meaning. In part the task is philological, clarifying the use of religious language and of understanding the function and appeal of myths and poetic lore. In part it is ethical and social, interpreting our human destiny, in the light of the Christian thesis, to be sure; but in terms also of the cultural and social task that now weighs heavily upon us as we participate in the tragedies of war and as we turn to the upbuilding of a life of peace.

We have, I think, the *key insight* for a theological reconstruction; but as yet we are without adequate experience in incorporating that insight in the language of worship and of common discourse for religious usage. The insight which seems to me to be central is that *God is the Creativity*, shaping our future. In more familiar language it reads: *God is in history and in human life!* This is a very old insight, going back in our tradition at least to the prophetic period of the Hebrew civilization. But it has been obscured from time to time by periodic revivals of metaphysical and mystical thought, first in the form of neo-platonism, then in scholastic realism, and more recently in absolute idealism. In each case the drama of the human venture has been absorbed into a cosmic scheme of salvation in such a way as to make the concrete world of history appear as mere shadow play. The Ritschlians of the last century, being aware of this distortion, sought to exclude metaphysics and mysticism from theological thinking and to reduce religion to ethics. One suspects, too, that the motive underlying much liberal, even humanistic, thinking today is a similar concern to rescue religion from this *meta-phansm*. Clearly the revival of neo-Reformation theology reveals antiphilosophical tendencies, and if pursued, may bring us again into an era of theology divorced from philosophy and science. The thesis implied in all these unphilosophical or antiphilosophical turns of thought is that man's destiny is an historical adventure, and the reality shaping his course is history-centered. So long as this thesis proceeds from sheer protest or negation, there is little hope of building a satisfying theology upon it. And this has been the limitation of all such antiphilosophical views. What is available to us now in the new theism is a cosmology that grants this thesis on metaphysical grounds. God, whatever else He may be beyond our human span and work-a-day world, is *Creativity* in history, a power working not only for righteousness in the affairs of men, but for realization of values implicit

in them. God is reality in process, shaping the future. Around this conviction the new theology will take form.

The results of this new orientation will be gratifying in more than one respect. It will bring theology out of the thin air of speculation and thus make it intelligible to the common man. It will give theology a sensible direction. Such an orientation will also resolve the tension between theology and philosophy without abandoning the philosophical concern. Instead, it will cause theology to proceed from its philosophic ground to take up issues that belong peculiarly to its task.

More important, however, the new orientation, proceeding from the conviction that the Creativity shaping our future is God in history, will heal the breach that always has persisted, making modern thinking seem discontinuous with the Hebraic-Christian tradition. For in this new setting, modern theology speaks a language that would be familiar to all prophets and seers, yea to common folk as well, who saw the human venture as *the triumph of hope over experience*, as faith overcoming the tragic sense of life. The crises of biblical times, with their overtones of praise, sung in the psalms and in the prophetic passages that well up with hope, will seem as contemporary counsel to our times. Set in the perspective of this Hebraic-Christian naturalism, a history-centered culture with overtones of spiritual destiny, the human venture will again take on spiritual meaning that is at once realistic and expectant: attentive to the events of the time, yet attuned to a transcendent mood that lifts man beyond all time. When we have made this insight clear and compelling, theology will assume its proper perspective for our age.

Conceiving God as Creativity, shaping men and society, would place other matters in clearer perspective. For example, in the light of this basic concept, What is man? Man is a growing creature who retains his spiritual qualities so long as he is in growth—so long as he is receptive and responsive to this creative working in man and in the world. What is sin? Sin is the inertia of human nature that obstructs or arrests the work of God in bringing human life to fulfillment and significance. What is salvation? Salvation is deliverance from the inertia of human nature which might otherwise cause man to relinquish his highest creative end.

From whence comes this salvation? It comes from creative influences out of history and in the living culture which hold before us the high ends of human destiny and impel us to live for these ends. Every culture has found its highest symbol of such devotion. To the Christian

man, that saving symbol is the Christ who, both by the spirit of His living and by His commitment to the life of significance, even unto death, set devotion to the Spirit of Creativity above all other claims.

But salvation is at a price which each man, in his own tragic experience of growth, pays! There is no substitutionary atonement in this respect; for in this solitary adjustment each man must walk alone. Yet, even here there is solace in the sustaining companionship of One who has carried the cross to achieve His own high fulfillment, and to prepare the way for the fulfillment of others. But no man achieves deliverance anew. He rests back upon the experiences of men who, before him, have endured the cross. In this respect there *is* substitutionary atonement. Each generation comes into the inheritance of an age that has been freed from the obstructions and moral inertia of an arrested past. This gives the clue to the element of tradition to which we rightfully hold and cherish. It is that increment of the past which carries and passes on the accumulative, hard-earned wisdom of social experiences that have freed men from the tyranny of custom-bound ideas and prejudices, and released them for further growth. That increment is the living tradition, the protoplasm of spirit that gives to each new age its point of departure, its moral ground.

What is grace? Grace is the healing force that comes from somewhere out of nature to soften the barbed sting of tragic transitions that initiate all growth, and the dissolution that accompanies it. No one who has suffered deeply will deny its reality or willingly forego its reinforcement. The Church has always known this healing force, and where tragedy has loomed as an inevitable intrusion upon life, it has pointed men and women to redemption through its silent working.

God as Creativity, being the object of man's supreme devotion, turns man's life outward beyond himself and beyond existence. For creativity implies the release from static being and from impulses that hold to survival. Life is orientated to the future realization of yet-unrealized value, each human life span becoming a unique channeling of the created energy, and a medium through which new possibilities of being are made concrete and actual. When one gives himself to this sovereign process of Creativity, he is delivered from the fears and frustrations that generally accompany the egoistic will to survive. Instead he is empowered by a sense of abandon which brings freedom; for it renders one invincible before every threat to his being, even before dissolution itself. One does not invite disaster; yet he knows that in the face of any disaster,

he can rise to a capacity for *psychic distance* that dispels all self-concern. Thus even death is defeated in the life that finds its sovereign center in Creativity, as has been the experience of all saints and seers who have lived this way.

These etchings of doctrine are suggestive of the theological outline that would seem to emerge from the perspective we have cited. Yet, one says, "to go no further than this is to walk to the edge of a precipice and look off in space." To go beyond these affirmations, however, would probably be to overreach our understanding. It is precisely because our view is obscured that we are compelled to grope our way through this thicket of thought and troubled experience. More light may lie ahead, once we have worked our way to a clearing.

One thing the tragedy of our times has done for us: It has called us back from the leisurely pursuit of interesting and speculative ideas to deal directly with the fundamental concerns that press daily upon us. And in this perspective we are able to view our theological task with more precision and with clearer relevance to the common life. Theology is not an abstract matter. It is reflective, but intensely practical. Theology must rise out of the midst of pressing experiences, out of the issues of life. It must help suffering and perplexed human beings to see universal meaning in their troubled lives. For it is by finding such vision that they are able to transmute experiences, otherwise disillusioning and defeating, into experiences identifying their lives with the vaster order of life. To suffer ignominiously is to invite pessimism and despair. To share the pain of a world in travail, or to take up the cross of the creative passage of events, is to enter into companionship with the God who makes all things new.



# Obedience to the Unenforceable

HERBERT C. ALLEMAN

THE phrase is Lord Moulton's.<sup>1</sup> He begins by stating that there are three great domains of human action. First comes the domain of positive law, where our actions are prescribed by laws which must be obeyed. Next comes the domain of free choice, which includes all those actions as to which we claim and enjoy absolute freedom. But between these two is a large and important domain in which there rules neither positive law nor absolute freedom. There is no law here which unalterably determines our course of action, and yet we do not feel free to do as we please. We have here a gradation from a consciousness of duty almost as strong as law to a feeling that the action involved is almost a matter of indifference. Some would divide that domain into sections or countries, e. g., the section of public spirit, the section of good form, certainly the section of duty; but whatever one does about it we have here the domain of obedience to the unenforceable. It is obedience which cannot be enforced by law. A man is his own enforcing officer.

"This is the land in which all those whom the law cannot reach take refuge." The law cannot here say "You must." Is it well, or even safe, to have such a land? Would it not be better to annex it permanently to the domain of law, as we temporarily do in a time of national emergency? Lord Moulton thinks not. In normal life there is such a variety of circumstances surrounding every individual that it would be very difficult to govern all his actions by fixed laws. There is a no-man's land between blind obedience and free choice. It is the land in which free men are trained. It is the domain of democracy.

That law is a great safeguard needs no argument. We are wont to hail it as the guardian of our communal life. On the slope of the Palatine in ancient Rome stood a temple dedicated to the worship of the divinity who was believed to keep watch over the homes of the people. Its altar was aflame with perpetual fire, fed by vestal hands. By this was typified the security of the state. So long as its flames were kept alive the state survived; their extinction foreboded disaster and decay. Such was the faith of a people who founded and for centuries governed an empire

<sup>1</sup> "Law and Manners," *The Atlantic Monthly*, July, 1942.

which for extent and grandeur set the mark for ancient world powers. What they saw in their temple with its eternal flame we have translated into the law of the land, the protecting power on which we rely for national security. That is basic, and without it we could not have the state. But, on the other hand, equally dear to us is the domain of free choice. It is here, says Lord Moulton, that spontaneity, energy and enthusiasm are born. The great movements which make the history of a country begin here. Here great ideals are conceived and convictions are born. Men must safeguard their rights. This is the other frontier of the large middle domain where neither law nor freedom is absolute, where no force compels—but good citizens obey.

The dangers which threaten this domain arise from the situations arising along either boundary. In the crisis history through which we are passing now there is a growing tendency to take the short cut to immediate results and multiply laws to regulate everything. And there is a corresponding reaction to the point of considering everything not absolutely regulated by law a matter of choice. It is Lord Moulton's thesis that the strength of a people depends upon and is in proportion to the extent of this domain of obedience to the unenforceable. "Mere obedience to law does not measure the greatness of a nation. It can be obtained by a strong executive, and most easily of all from a timorous people. Nor is the license of behavior which so often accompanies the absence of law, and which is miscalled liberty, a proof of greatness. The true test is the extent to which the individual man can be trusted to obey self-imposed law."

It is in that field that the severest test of our democratic principles is taking place. While we have never been more vociferous in our lip-service to the ideals of freedom there are indications that we have grown impatient of the more leisurely ways of the democratic process and have taken refuge in peremptory expedients. Witness the loss of confidence in the freedom of debate in our deliberative assemblies and the growing tendency to substitute committee findings for the more tedious method of general discussion. Whether we like it or not, the trend of government in this new century has been toward autocracy.

That is, the tendency of present-day government is to extend the area ruled by positive law. There have been, however, some notable exceptions. Take labor's right of collective bargaining. That was won as much by the abrogation of law as by the enactment of law. It is an

open question whether labor has proved equal to its new responsibility. We have not yet seen that fully established. It will be a loss to our democratic system if labor fails to obey the unenforceable. We do not want to extend the realm of positive law. The realm of individual rights growing out of the nature of personality must be jealously guarded, for without robust personal independence there cannot be a democracy. The encroachments on that freedom under the stress or pretext of national emergency have multiplied to the point of peril. The power to enact a law is by no means a guaranty of the wisdom of enacting it. Voluntary obedience has been our glory and our strength.

"If you want to know how strong the principle of obedience to the unenforceable is," says Lord Moulton, "remember the account of the 'Titanic' disaster. The men were gentlemen to the edge of death. 'Ladies first.' Why was that? Law did not require it. Force could not have compelled it. . . ." It might be said, that would not have been the case with the steerage passengers. We have no evidence that it was not, but the same obedience to the unenforceable was exemplified again and again in the battle of Britain. A people disciplined in self-restraint in a free land will do it, whatever their social class. It is their way of life, and as this Global War is showing they will die for it.

It was that spirit, that unquenchable love of freedom, that won the first World War. It is high time to take stock of our motives then and call a halt on our self-slander because that war did not prevent this one. Our motives were as worthy then as they are now. The mistake was in our rhetoric, not in our convictions. We may smile now at such slogans as "To make the world safe for democracy," "A war to end war," and the like. We went to war then, as we are in war now, to save our free institutions.

In his Autobiography,<sup>2</sup> G. K. Chesterton gives a notable account of the war memorial which was erected at his home town of Beaconsfield. With characteristic humor he describes the democratic process by which the form of the memorial was finally arrived at. The original proposal was that a granite cross should be set up at the crossroads. "Before the discussion was half over," says Mr. Chesterton, "there had entered into it the following subjects of debates: (1) The Position of Woman in the Modern World; (2) Prohibition and the Drink Question; (3) The Excellence or Exaggeration of the Cult of Athletics; (4) The Problem of

<sup>2</sup> Sheed and Ward, New York, 1936.

Unemployment, Especially in Relation to Ex-Service Men; (5) The Question of Support for Hospitals and the General Claims of Surgery and Medicine; (6) The Justice of the War; (7) Above all, or rather under all . . . . the great war of religion which has never ceased to divide mankind, especially since that sign was set up among them. Those who debated the matter were a little group of the inhabitants of a little country town, the rector and the doctor and the bank manager and the respectable tradesmen of the place, with a few hangers-on like myself, of the more disreputable professions of journalism and the arts. But the powers that were present there in the spirit came out of all the ages and all the battlefields of history." The counterproposal was for a community building of some kind—which brought out the various subjects catalogued above, with the result that no agreement could be reached, but later a cross was erected by private subscription and the names of the boys of Beaconsfield who gave their lives for their country were inscribed upon it.

The point is that the Beaconsfield memorial did what it was designed to do, it commemorated a great sacrifice and a great rescue. It stands there to proclaim that there were men in Beaconsfield who were willing to die to save Beaconsfield and to proclaim that something had been saved by their sacrifice. In Mr. Chesterton's eloquent words: "What was saved was Beaconsfield; just as what was saved was Britain; not an ideal Beaconsfield, not a perfect or perfectly progressing Beaconsfield, not a new Beaconsfield with gates of gold and pearl descending out of heaven from God; but Beaconsfield. A certain social balance, a certain mode of life, a certain tradition of morals and manners . . . . was in fact menaced by the fate of falling into a complete and perhaps permanent inferiority and impotence, as compared with another tradition and mode of life. It is all nonsense to say that in such a struggle defeat would not have been destruction. . . . States so defeated become vassal states, retaining a mere formal independence, and in every vital matter steered by the diplomacy and penetrated by the culture of the conqueror. The men whose names are written on the Beaconsfield War Memorial died to prevent Beaconsfield being immediately overshadowed by Berlin, all its produce being used for the international purposes of Berlin, even if the King of Prussia were not called in so many words the Suzerain of the King of England. They died to prevent it, and they did prevent it."

That was their war aim, and it was a sufficient war aim. The right

to stand in the freedom won by a thousand years of struggle wrung from grudging kings and nobles, sealed by the blood of earlier defenders of their rights—the freedom to think their own thoughts and make their own compacts, to fly their own flag and yield allegiance to their own chosen government. It is out of the domain of freedom, and never from that of autocratic law, that we may look for obedience to the unenforceable.

It must be evident to anyone who has followed this discussion sympathetically that obedience to the unenforceable is not a philosophy of life which will realize itself. On the contrary, it is directly dependent on an adequate motive power. That motive power is religion, and that religion at its best is the religion of Jesus. For the religion of Jesus began with the religion of Moses ("Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets; I am come not to destroy but to fulfill"), and the religion of Moses, in its origins, was the completest example of obedience to the unenforceable that history has disclosed. The point of Lord Moulton's argument is that the best life—that of the highest ideals and the best ordering—is a matter of gentlemen's agreement. We are wont to think of the religion of Moses as the most legalistic, the most regimented, the least elastic among state religions—with no room for voluntary obedience to the unenforceable. Looked at from the viewpoint of sociology, that might be the reaction. But Mosaism was a theocracy. Its laws were obligations. Its formative "words," though familiarly repeated by us as "commandments," were but the specifications of a gentleman's agreement with Jehovah. They are in a negative form, but in Hebrew there are two words for "not," *lo* and *al*, corresponding to the Greek *ouk* and *me*. It is interesting that the Commandments do not have the imperative negative *al* but the positive negative *lo*; they had best be translated, not "Thou shalt not," but "Thou wilt not." They are the specifications of things that are simply not done in the covenant relation of Israel with its God. The Decalogue is a gentleman's agreement. It was only when the "words" of Sinai came into competition with the law codes of surrounding nations that there came to be a code of Israel known as the Law. Israel's greatness declined as her laws multiplied and her life was hedged in by restrictions. Precepts multiplied, freedom departed.

Jesus came not to destroy the Law but to free it from its own burdens. "Fulfillment" sometimes means subtraction as well as multiplication. It means deliverance from the thralldom of the meticulous.



Jesus points the way to keeping the Law by having none of its details to keep. He condemns not only murder but the thoughts and expressions of hatred and anger which lead to murder; not only adultery but the lascivious imagination out of which adultery flowers; not only false oaths but the untruthful disposition and behavior which made oaths seem necessary. "Let your speech be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; and whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." Every cash register, every fare register, every time card are witnesses of the something "more" which "cometh of evil." Jesus enjoins kindness not only to neighbors and friends but also to strangers and enemies; He discourages retaliation, not only in excess of the injury but retaliation in principle. By directing men to obedience to the unenforceable he became the great liberator from the thralldom of law, the world's first Gentleman, the Restorer of our ideal life.

All of Jesus' exhortations were made, however, not to humanity *in vacuo* but to men in the Father's world, which means, in human relationships. He was "the light of the world," and His great contribution to the light of life was His revelation of God as Father and the blessedness of obedience. How many dark spots are cleared up by those two rays of light! Two facts at once appear clear. If God is our Father then Pippa's happy song is not mere empty sentiment:

"God's in his heaven—  
All's right with the world."

The Father made the world, and not a sparrow falls without His knowledge. The birds of the heaven . . . sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them." That is not a cosmic but a religious explanation of the world. As Dr. J. S. Whale put it: "The Christian doctrine of creation does not arise from our interest in explaining the world or accounting for its origin at some approximately datable time in the cosmic past. . . . Here no scientific statements are possible. . . . Belief in the creation means a way, *the way*, of understanding the present world. It is an act of faith (Hebrews 11:3)." <sup>3</sup> The Christian's doctrine of creation is not a concept evolved from the mind, it is a matter of experience. We accept life as lived in our Father's world.

And if God is our Father, all we are brethren. What a flood of

<sup>3</sup> *Christian Doctrine*, Macmillan Co., New York, p. 32.

light that ray sheds on all our relationships! War and peace, capital and labor, race prejudice with its consequent persecutions, our community and church example, all resolve themselves into the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would that men should do unto you." Laws become not restrictions but concessions, specifications of community action and not autocratic exactions. If God is our Father we come to know law as the reflection of His mind. In a great house, with many inmates, there must be rules of living for the orderly protection of each one's task. In a normal world laws are God's rules of order. All good is locked up in law, and the key is obedience. Jesus found it so. He was born with a human body, and He obeyed its laws. He was a child in a home, and He was subject to its laws. He grew up under the protection and order of a state, and He obeyed its laws. He did not rebel against its edicts or count His submission slavery, because state powers are ordained of God. He had one rule of life—the Father's will, which became the prospectus of his well-being. Even when that rule led Him to the cross and His Father's face was lost from His vision He did not swerve from the rule He had accepted for His life but gave the supreme exhibition of obedience to the unenforceable, when He said, "Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done."

In the last analysis, obedience to the unenforceable is a religious act. Whether it be a matter of conscious altruism or of personal aspiration, such obedience is a mark of unselfishness that lifts us into the realm of religious motivation. Laws are made for people in the mass; obedience is a matter of the individual conscience. A nation will never be stronger than the conscience of its people. Here is the supreme opportunity of the prophet of God. Until duty is lighted up with the glow of personal relationship it will remain a thing to be escaped—such is the drag of human nature.

If the Christian ministry has failed in the great crises of our World Wars, it has been in this direction. The age-spirit of methodology has led us captive. Utopias have dazzled our eyes as they did the eyes of Israel. Programs of world reconstruction have blacked out the simple rules of personal rectitude. Special privilege has weighted feet which should have been swift in the path of example. Paeans of public acclaim have drowned out the silent approval of a good conscience. For it is still true that "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

# The Methodist Conception of the Church

HARRIS FRANKLIN RALL

## I

THE doctrine of the Church can be rightly understood in the case of any communion only against the background of its conception of the Christian religion. It is particularly true of Methodism which did not begin as a Church but as a movement within the Anglican Church (first in the person of its founder, then in the form of societies which were within the Anglican Church, though never really a part of it). It was not concerned with reformation of doctrine, nor with any theory of the Church or form of church polity. There was a strong ethical emphasis, but its primary interest was not a reform of morals. Wesley's concern, like that of Paul and Luther, the two men who most influenced him, was first of all the personal search for salvation. He found this where they did, in the God of forgiving mercy who came to men in Jesus Christ. The gospel which he had rediscovered for himself, and the moral and religious destitution of England, alike moved him to begin his life vocation of missionary, or evangelist. For him, as for Paul, this was a call from God to be placed above any conflicting allegiance. So, though he insisted that he was a good and loyal Anglican, he disobeyed the bishop, contravened the rule of the Church, and went about preaching, untroubled by diocesan lines or episcopal control, quite as Paul was unmoved by Jewish opposition or the attitude of the pillar apostles at Jerusalem. The other steps came in order, each following for him of necessity from his conviction as to the call to evangelize and the requirements of the care for those who were won for Christ. He gathered his followers into societies, in nearly everything but name quite like Paul's churches. Seeing the urgent need of supervision and of intimate religious fellowship, he arranged for classes and leaders. That involved lay leadership and it was but a step beyond that to appoint lay preachers. His preachers were travelers, staying but a few months, or a year at most, in any one place; it was an itinerant ministry rather than that of settled pastors. And, quite naturally, the practice arose of calling these preachers together in an annual conference.

This was one side of Wesley and of his movement. But there was another. He was an Anglican clergyman. The doctrine, polity and the ritual of the Church were alike held by him in high esteem. Against opposition he insisted that meetings of his societies should be held at other hours than those of the Church and that his followers should commune at Anglican altars, or elsewhere if they had other church affiliations. It was obvious, however, that Wesley's societies formed a Church in effect. Wesley's position was contradictory and it is not strange that his own utterances were sometimes in conflict. As early as 1745, he describes "the plain origin of church government" in the primitive Church in such fashion as to indicate the parallel of the Methodist movement, the implication being that the Methodist societies formed a legitimate Church with himself as bishop and his preachers as presbyters. His position from this time on is essentially that of a broad churchman, believing in the episcopal form of church government as "scriptural and apostolical," but not as legally prescribed and binding. To speak of the "separation" of his societies from the Anglican Church, however, is misleading. Wesley wanted to remain in the Church and did, but the societies themselves were never a part of the Church, nor their members as a whole within that Church. Nevertheless, the Anglican Church and its traditions have had a very definite influence upon the Methodist movement.

It is against this double background that the Methodist conception of the Christian religion and the Christian Church is to be understood. Outwardly, its polity relates it to the Anglican Church. It has bishops, shorn somewhat of power in these latter days and yet having definitely more authority than in the Protestant Episcopal Church. It ordains men as deacons and elders, or presbyters, consecrating (not ordaining) its bishops. Its ritual derived from the Anglican Church. The new united Methodist Church in this country still has, substantially unchanged, the Articles of Religion, reduced from thirty-nine to twenty-five, which the Anglican Wesley sent to the newly formed Church in America. Methodist theological thought, on the whole, has moved in the line of the great tradition of the Church. To this side it owes its ecumenical outlook. It has never thought of itself as the one true Church, but rather as part of the one holy catholic Church. Wesley was more catholic than some who call themselves Catholics in this day, for, not himself a dissenter and himself strongly evangelical in his viewpoint, he yet had place for Roman Catholics on the one side and dissenting bodies on the other.

However, the decisive element with Wesley and in the Methodist movement came from the evangelical side. That appears in its doctrine. The insistent Methodist emphasis has been on Christianity as a gospel and a way of life. Wesley's great concern was with the preaching of that gospel and the promotion of that life. Nominally he held to the Anglican Church order, but in the end it was the pragmatic test that decided for him and for Methodism. He did change from high churchman to broad churchman. He concluded that there were but two orders and finally agreed as a presbyter to ordain others and to set Doctor Coke aside as a presbyter with the office of bishop. The term he used was superintendent, though the reference in his private shorthand diary speaks of bishop. But all this was secondary. The essential matter was a form of organization and administration which would serve the vital religious ends which he considered supreme. That is the position of Methodism today. It has its bishops but denies that they are a third order. It denies that any particular church order is authoritative. It has a very closely knit organization and it gives its leaders large powers, but it does this from the standpoint of efficiency.

This emphasis on Christianity as gospel and way of life helps to explain the position of Methodism in matters of doctrine, with its combination of liberalism in principle and conservatism in conclusion. Heresy trials have been almost wholly lacking. Its theology has been in the main that of the evangelical groups, with the acceptance of the position of the ancient creeds. Yet it has been receptive to new ideas, and the nineteenth-century developments in natural science and historical criticism caused relatively little disturbance. Doctrinal formulation, like church order, has been distinctly secondary, as was the case with Wesley.

For it Christianity is first of all a message, God's word of salvation for men in Christ. This salvation means the forgiveness of the sinner by grace as he repents and believes. But it means also a new kind of life. Here Wesley's emphasis on the ethical came in, taking at times with some of his followers a form of perfectionism which has evoked sharp criticism. In principle it was what Paul had insisted upon: forgiveness meant not simply pardon, but "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." God demands a new life, and He gives what He demands. With Wesley that took the form of an emphasis on the doctrine of sanctification, which he felt the Reformers had neglected. Grace meant for him, as for Paul, not only forgiveness but transforming power. He



emphasized the work of the Spirit; but the test of the Spirit's presence for him was the fact of love (as in I Corinthians 13), and the gift of the Spirit involved the constant demand that those who lived by the Spirit should also walk by the Spirit.

Against this background his conception of the Church becomes clearer. He appreciated the historical institution as became an Anglican, the Church founded by Christ with its clergy and its sacraments; nor was there lacking the thought of the mystical body of Christ of which Charles Wesley sang: "One family we dwell in Him, one Church above, beneath." But there was a renewal of the idea of the Church which he felt obtained in the first days: a Church set to proclaim the gospel, a Church of militant evangelism which could not be indifferent to the masses as was the Anglicanism of his day, a Church for which "the communion of the saints" meant not merely the historical and mystical and transcendent, but something vital and human, a fellowship in which people knew each other and helped each other in matters both spiritual and temporal.

## II

The book of *The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Church* (edition of 1940) is of primary authority in stating the dominant position of Methodist thought today. It must be remembered, however, that this volume is almost wholly given to matters of organization and administration, and that large liberty and wide variance of thought obtain in the Church. The trend of thought in the Church is to be discovered in its various periodical publications, which have wide circulation, in the volumes issued by its press, particularly those coming from its leaders in church life and theological instruction, and in the courses of study which are prescribed for the training of such of its preachers (principally "accepted supply pastors") as are not graduates in theology.

1. Christ is the founder of the Church in the sense that He created the fellowship of His followers by winning their faith, giving them His gospel, and calling them into His service, not in the sense that He formally established an institution, determined its organization and constituted a hierarchy with specific authority.

2. The Methodists do not look upon the New Testament as legally prescriptive in matters of church organization. They believe that they represent and continue the New Testament Church in its essential features of the preaching of the Word, worship, the ministry and the practice of

Christian fellowship. In the organization of the Church and the prosecution of its work they are guided by practical considerations, viewing the organization functionally and the particular type as belonging to the *benesse* rather than the *esse* of the Church. In matters of doctrine they look to the faith which animated the early Church and the gospel of Christ which it preached as brought to us by the New Testament, rather than consider the New Testament as a theological textbook or a collection of revealed doctrines.

3. The Church as a fellowship here on earth has a divine and a human aspect. In its creative source and continuing life the fellowship is of God; it is created and constituted through its sharing in the divinely given life; it is a communion (*koinonia*) of the Holy Spirit. But the divine fellowship is humanly administered and calls for expression in human attitudes and action. Upon this life of active fellowship Methodism has laid great stress. Hence with the Word, the worship and sacraments as forms of fellowship, there have been the informal group meetings for free prayer, personal witnessing and conference about the religious life. It has included also the concern for material and other needs.

Methodism does not think of the Church as a fellowship of the saintly, that is of those who have attained a certain spiritual-ethical standard (the "converted," or "sanctified"). But if "saints" be used in the New Testament sense as those who are devoted, or belong, to Christ as Lord, then it views the Church as a communion of the saints. "All persons seeking to be saved from their sins and desiring to lead the Christian life are eligible for membership" (*Discipline*, Art. 131). It receives as members those who come from other evangelical Churches. It considers the saints in heaven and the people of the old covenant as part of the one Church of the living God, as well as all those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and seek to do His will.

Methodism, though often too much preoccupied with its own affairs, has been marked by a fraternal attitude toward other Churches, by catholicity of spirit, holding itself to be a part of the universal Church of Christ. John Wesley's words, used as a preface to the financial report of the Provisional Committee of the World Council of Churches, represent fairly the present-day attitude of Methodism: "I desire to have a league, offensive and defensive, with every soldier of Christ. We have not only one faith, one hope, one Lord, but are directly engaged in one warfare." "Ought not those who are united to one common head, and employed

by Him in one common work, to be united to each other?" Methodism has been more concerned in the past with Christian unity than with church union. In recent years it has been increasingly interested in the ecumenical movement. Its important steps in relation to Methodist union have been thought of not as a surrogate for the larger matter but as preparation.

4. Methodism has not stood for any one view of the relation of the Church to Christ. It does not think of the Church as a hierarchial institution with absolute control of doctrine, rule and the means of salvation. On the other hand, the Church is not a humanly instituted and merely voluntary organization. It is a fellowship created and empowered by the Spirit of God, ruled by the spirit of Christ, carrying on the work of Christ, with Christ as its head. Where it is thought of as the body of Christ and a continuing incarnation, this is less in mystical-metaphysical terms, more with the thought of a spiritual organism ruled by Christ through which Christ works in the world.

5. As to the vocation of the Church, it must be borne in mind that message and mission are hardly to be separated. The first task of the Church is to preach the gospel, the second to associate men together in the fellowship of faith and worship, in mutual help, and in common service. The message of the gospel means these three things particularly: God's forgiving mercy in Christ intended for all men, to be carried by the Church to all in evangelization here and in missions abroad; God's grace through His Spirit as a power to redeem men from sin, to transform men in the spirit of Christ, and to enable men to do the will of God and carry out His work; a summons to men to live after the spirit of Christ, to see what His will means, and to do His will in all the walks and relations of life, social as well as individual. The stress upon the Lordship of Christ over all life and on the transforming power of the gospel in all life (the grace of God in us as well as for us) is a special mark of Methodist preaching. "The gospel of Christ," in Wesley's words, "knows no religion but social, no holiness but social holiness."

6. The world apart from God is hopeless, helpless and in the power of evil. But the world is not without the presence and working of God. Methodism no more believes in total social depravity than in total individual depravity. The Church is in the world but not (in God's purpose) of the world. Yet the historical Church has in it the limitations and evils of the human and finite. The Church is called to preach the gospel to the world, with its judgment and its mercy, to live the life of God

within the world as a fellowship in Christ, to serve the world, but not to flee from the world. The state, like the home and the world of industry, has its place in the will of God and should serve God in serving man. The Christian should serve his nation in all ways compatible with the Christian faith and way of life. But nation and state belong to the sphere of the relative, and absolute loyalty belongs only to God; and the God whom we obey is the God of all nations and peoples. The Church is to proclaim God's will to state and industry and to point out what contravenes that will. The kingdom of God is the rule of God upon earth and the consummation of that rule in the eternal realm. The kingdom of God is the more inclusive concept. The Church is to be a realization of God's rule within the Christian fellowship and an instrument for the extension of God's rule upon earth.

7. By definition, The Methodist Church has held, with Wesley, that its ministers were ordained in a true historical succession. But in its conception of its oneness with the true Church of Christ, it lays its emphasis on the proclamation of the gospel, the living experience of the presence and saving power of God through His Spirit, loyalty in life and service to the way of Christ, and the practice of true Christian fellowship. Its stress has thus been upon the organic and vital rather than the institutional and legal.

8. Emphasizing the functional conception of the Church and its organization, Methodism has made constant adaptation of its work to changing conditions. It has maintained a close organization and centralized direction as part of a militantly religious character, but has become increasingly democratic at the same time. The bishops are held more closely responsible, the laity is given a larger part in the various councils of the Church, and women have a large share in responsible direction as they have always had in service. There has been a marked decrease in mass evangelism and the type of appeal which went with this, and less tendency to impose rigid forms of religious experience, in relation to conversion and sanctification. More attention has been given to personal evangelism and the obligation of the Church in relation to religious nurture. Preaching is central in emphasis, but increasing use of the open chancel indicates the recognition of the co-ordinate place of worship. There is a deeper appreciation of the Church in its divine aspect, its historical continuity and its ecumenical character. Steady progress has been made in the education of its ministry and the higher educational requirements obtain throughout the Church. It follows a tradition of Wesley in the extensive

publication of literature, both book and periodical. That is especially true in literature for religious education, for the various departments of church work and its active ministry. From an earlier interest in *reform* movements as related to the suppression of slavery, intemperance, vice and gambling, the Church has recognized increasingly the *constructive* significance of the Christian gospel for the total social life of mankind, especially in terms of economic justice, and of international and race relations. The Church has not maintained its earlier close contact with the lower economic levels, a loss which many feel does not necessarily follow from advance at other points. With the growth of the Church, the development of large congregations, and the multiplied competing interests and associations, The Methodist Church has lost something of the intimate and informal religious fellowship so helpful in its first stages.

9. The Methodist Church makes no claim to possess anything that is not to be found in the older Churches. Its theology has been definitely evangelical, but it has not thought of itself as being in one particular line of succession to the exclusion of others. Its distinctive emphasis has been on the ethical-personal, alike in its conception of God and man, of salvation and the Christian life, and of the Church—this as against the institutional-legalistic trend on the one hand, and the mystical-metaphysical-quietistic on the other.

So far as it has any special contribution to make, this is to be found in the way in which it unites elements of the Christian heritage which other movements tend to oppose one to the other in exclusion. It did not begin by reform in doctrine or organization; that is, by denial, but rather by affirmation, asserting neglected aspects of the Christian way. Its inclusiveness has come not by efforts at mediation but by seeking to set forth the full meaning of the Christian faith. Thus it has stressed personal faith but kept it free, and has held to the historic faith but not identified it with any one statement. It has placed high value upon the corporate nature of the Christian life, but refused to make the institution an end in itself. It has renewed in its life the Christian fellowship as intimate and actual group relation, but without the separatist tendency of the sects or pietistic groups. It has united the ethical and the religious, man's freedom and responsibility with his dependence upon God. It has regarded the gift of God as a demand, and has seen the demand as possible only through the gift, opposing equally moralism and quietism. With its emphasis on evangelism, and on conversion and sanctification as works of God's grace to be consciously experienced, there has gone a due



regard for religious culture and the work of education. In its preaching it has been insistent upon the transcendent holiness of God, the sovereignty of God, man's sinfulness and his total dependence; but its primary emphasis has been personal-ethical, upon the moral character of God rather than upon sovereignty and irresistible power. Recognizing man's sinfulness and affirming that what he is and has comes from God, it has insisted on man's nature as personal-ethical being linking him to God, upon his capacity for response, his freedom and responsibility, and upon the gospel as involving not only forgiveness but a transforming power. Stressing individual experience, it has rejected religious atomism. It has seen that the personal-ethical emphasis involved the social-historical. So it has thought of the world as the subject of redemption and of history as the sphere of God's work. Holding to the hope of a final consummation, it has prayed for the coming of the kingdom of God upon earth. In this realm, too, while recognizing that all is of God, it has affirmed God's grace in working through man and man's opportunity and obligation as worker together with God, rejecting both activism and quietism.

Without assuming to call Methodism a "bridge church," we may see its service as a unitive force alike in its life and in its conception of Christianity. Not only has it united these and other elements that tend to become separated, but it has served historically to bring together what Troeltsch indicates as the Church and the sect conceptions of the Christian religion.

10. Methodism has much to learn, alike in clear apprehension and in actual realization of the Christian heritage. Aggressively active, it has not given adequate attention to the need of worship and of continued renewal of spiritual life. Stressing organization in order to do efficient service and developing an elaborate machinery of church operation, it has tended at times to forget that this is means and not end and to use too much of its strength in its maintenance. Catholic in theory, it has often been so engrossed in its own activities that it has not cultivated in its membership the knowledge of the life and work and needs of ecumenical Christianity, or participated sufficiently in the larger responsibilities. Centralized control has tended to limit congregational freedom. Absorption in the present has stood in the way of appreciation of the historic past. It has still to learn how to unite its traditional freedom and fervor and genuineness of worship with the reverence and order and beauty of worship as seen in some other communions.

# The Experience of the Holy Spirit

HENRY DAVID GRAY

THE history of the Christian Church is time's exposition of the Trinity. The Son meets us in the Good Shepherd of the catacombs who suffered with His persecuted Church. The High and Holy Father is enshrined in the majesty of the cathedrals. The Holy Spirit is expressed in the Unseen Presence, emphasized in the devotional life of the Church in recent centuries.<sup>1</sup> This analysis holds even though the nineteenth century questioned the *reality* of God under the challenge of science, anthropology, higher criticism and secularism. The picking up of that gauntlet quickly focused attention on the *nature* of God and therefore, on the two related doctrines of grace, and of the Holy Spirit.

## I

Belief in the Holy Spirit has always grown out of actual experience. Long centuries before Christ men felt some power other than themselves operative in the world and in their lives. To this power they gave the name "spirit." Sometimes spirit meant a general diffuse world influence. More often it designated the source of unusual acts, extraordinary life-power in individuals and groups, or striking phenomena of nature. With the rise of Old Testament monolatry, spirit became identified with Yahweh, and through the revelation to the prophets this association took on ethical content. Then, too, the idea of an intermittent spirit influence gradually yielded to the concept of a more constantly present divine power. Furthermore, that power was increasingly recognized as made manifest in persons. No longer was the spirit an irresponsible power. It was the definite agent and manifestation of God. This spirit, in the later Old Testament, was more than a nation-guiding power. It was also an individual-guiding power which brought men into fellowship with God. Although thus conceiving the *function* of the spirit, the Old Testament writers continued to hold a quasimaterial view of its *nature* as a sort of substantial divine essence. Thus, when strict monotheism emerged, the very existence of the spirit was called into question. Nevertheless, because it corresponded with an actual experience in the lives of men, belief in the spirit persisted.

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<sup>1</sup>This is developed from a suggestion in H. B. Alexander, *Truth and the Faith*.

When we turn from the Old Testament to the New Testament we move in a very different realm. Here, the centrality of the spirit, now known explicitly as the Holy Spirit, is everywhere evident. Reference to it is made in all writings except Second and Third John. It is mentioned, under different designations, at least three hundred and thirty-five times. Of greater importance than mere numbers is the part played in the life of Christ and of His Church by belief in the Holy Spirit. Although there are but three uncontested synoptic sayings of Jesus concerning the Spirit,<sup>2</sup> the narrative of the events clearly and consistently attributes His unparalleled life, work and teaching to the presence in Him of the Holy Spirit. It was clear to His followers that Jesus possessed an extraordinary endowment of creative life-power. Never man spake as this man. Never man lived as this man. Recall how the birth, presentation, baptism and declaration of mission are all linked to the activity of the Spirit. As Swete puts it, "Conceived by the Spirit, baptized by the Spirit, full of the power of the Spirit, He knew Himself to be continually stirred by the Spirit's breath."<sup>3</sup> It is because the Spirit thus *rested* upon Jesus that He was unconscious of the need to seek, define or delimit it. His experience of the Spirit was of a never-lapsing oneness with God.

From the day of Pentecost onward the Holy Spirit has been the quickening and sustaining power of Christ's followers. The experience of these apostles preceded and inspired their acts. In the life and teaching of Jesus, and in the new power which came to them at Pentecost, the disciples were face to face with a wonderful fact, with a reality which they could only explain as an operation of God. It was their conviction that as God had sent forth *His Son* into the world, so, when the Son's work was finished, God had sent forth *His Spirit* to continue the work under new conditions. This belief was different from the idea of spirit in world-wide religion, or even in the Old Testament, in that the Holy Spirit of the apostles is intimately associated with the Risen Christ. The New Testament Church felt the presence and power of the Spirit as the gift of Jesus. In the earlier New Testament writings this Spirit is primarily known as a power, sometimes personal, oftentimes impersonal. But on every page there is an acute and vital consciousness of the *effects* of the Spirit. New vitality of personal life and all the works of the

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 12:31-32; Mark 3:28-30; Luke 12:10.

<sup>3</sup> Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the New Testament*, p. 135, commenting on the Gospel of John.

Church are attributed to this creative Agency, not yet clearly defined but always vividly experienced.

It remained for Paul and John to make explicit the doctrine which is implicit in the life and teachings of Jesus and in the deeds and thoughts of His first followers. The Spirit is here known as the personal agent of God's grace who leads, judges, heals, inspires, commissions and directs both the individual and the Church. Herein the Apostle to the Gentiles gave a penetrating insight into the nature of God's relationship to man as the Redeemer and Sustainer of human life. He linked the concept of the Holy Spirit with the consciousness of the indwelling Christ. Paul held the Spirit and the Living Christ to be separate entities, but speaks of them again and again as performing the selfsame functions in relation to men. In this personal agent, whether called the Spirit of Christ, the indwelling Christ or the Holy Spirit, the Apostle found a satisfying doctrine of the intimate and personal yet never overbearing way in which God deals with the human soul. This teaching was carried further by John, whose *παρακλήτος* is almost Christ's second self. His interpretation of the work of the Spirit as regenerator, comforter and sustainer is in effect the equivalent of the work of Christ. This Holy Spirit, according to John, is the constant guide to all truth.

In view of subsequent history, it is significant to recall the belief concerning the Holy Spirit which is reflected in the later New Testament. Those of primitive mind can find support for their views in the Apocalypse, where the Spirit is an impersonal power. Doctor Gore and his high-Church brethren can find bases for their views in the later epistles, where the Spirit is closely associated with the sacraments, the ministry and the church as a visible entity. This is due chiefly to the influence of the rising Church Catholic, and is not an advance upon the Synoptic example and apostolic teaching, but rather, a return to Old Testament or even more primitive concepts.

The New Testament is the record of a great experience. It contains also the reflections of thoughtful men upon this experience of renewed personal vitality, deep peace, vital unity and constant strength. In the New Testament the reality of the spirit is nowhere questioned because it is everywhere experienced. We might discuss the evidence for the operation of God's Spirit in the intelligence, beauty and sublimity seen in nature, in the testimony of our consciousness of self concerning the inner life of man, in the orderly schematization of knowledge which

we call philosophy, or in the example of great lives, but the one, ultimate, convincing basis for belief in the Holy Spirit is our own individual experience, and our own community experience. Belief in the Holy Spirit is always strong when men live in the presence and power of that individual and community experience.

## II

The experience of the Holy Spirit, whether individual or community, is always personal. It is unlikely that the New Testament writers thought of the Holy Spirit as a person. The concept of personality as we now know it is a relatively recent development. Moreover, the Old Testament's semimaterial view of spirit exercised a strong influence on the New Testament writers. Nevertheless, the specifically Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit as personal has its legitimate roots in the teaching of the New Testament. The irreducible element in the self-hood of man is recognized as spirit; and although regarded as a supernatural power, the Holy Spirit is often spoken of in personal terms and to Him personal attributes are applied. When finally Paul sets side by side the influence of the risen Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit, the New Testament basis for the personal character of the Holy Spirit is definitely laid. In John this personal Spirit is further known as sent from the heart of God to take up the work of Christ in dealing with the souls of men. Thus the Christian development of the general religious consciousness of "spirit" while gathering to itself the idea of the spirit in man, culminates in the conception of the Holy Spirit as God continuing His gracious personal activity among men.

Both history and experience testify to the validity of this *Christian* belief in the Holy Spirit. It is the witness of God-conscious souls over the years that man is made in the image of God, potentially a personal and spiritual being, and that this germinal spirituality develops by an influence not of ourselves, an influence at once holy and loving, and always intimately personal even when cosmically revealed. To this witness is added the testimony of our own experience. We know that all that we spiritually possess is given, not achieved. The very capacity to respond to God is itself a native endowment, and therefore, a gift of the Spirit rather than an attainment of men. There is latent in human consciousness the ability to interpret life in terms of divine direction, in relation to spiritual values, in a relationship known as fellowship with God. But



the existence of this capacity to act religiously does not imply its utilization. Religious experience, possible because of the germinal personal and spiritual nature of man, is evoked by nothing less than a revelation of God. A truly religious response can be elicited only by a divine object, and only on divine initiative. It is the witness of Christian experience that that divine initiative meets us as Spirit with spirit, a holy, loving, perfect personality dealing with sinful, thoughtless, imperfect and incipient personalities. *The Holy Spirit known in Christian history and Christian experience is God as Spirit dealing with men as spirits, God as Person dealing with men as persons; God, as immanent within and self-communicative to the personality of man.* Thus, the nature of spiritual experience at its highest is a fellowship of personal spirits.

It might be said here that this leads to a functional view of the Trinity. Christianity in its contact with some other religions, notably Mohammedanism, is challenged to maintain its claim as a strictly monotheistic faith. The tritheistic charge is also urged by many of our own associates. The argument concerns the meaning and validity of the terms "personal" and "person," as applied to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We hold that there are three distinct, separable personal manifestations of the one ultimate divine person. Each of these personal agents is God dealing with men, as Father and creator, as revealer and redeemer, as inspirer and sustainer. Yet all three are one, because the perfect personal Spirit which moved in creation is the same Spirit incarnate in Christ, and the same guiding light which comes to us in the Holy Spirit. Because there is this triple experience of God, we rightly speak of a triple revelation of God, in nature, in history and in personality.

In Christian experience the Holy Spirit is known as God dealing with men personally in grace. By the reality of our experience of fellowship with God we are led to assert that He is a person; which means at least a self-conscious, self-determining, self-directing will. As Matthews well says, "If we are convinced that any God with whom we are concerned must be a living God, we shall be led of necessity to think of him as personal, for to be a person is the most adequate way of being alive."<sup>4</sup> To be sure the category "personal" as applied to the divine is something infinitely more exalted than the category "personal" as applied to the human. God's Holy Spirit meets us as *perfect* personality dealing with *imperfect* personality. On this basic interpretation we can be assured that

<sup>4</sup>W. R. Matthews, *God in Christian Thought and Experience*, p. 161.

in all His dealings with us the Holy Spirit will never act in an impersonal manner, but will move always in the sphere of personal relations, by methods of personal intercourse, toward a personal consummation.

### III

What then, is the experience of this personal Holy Spirit in the life of the individual?

In the life of the individual, the Spirit is God working for that reconstitution of human beings known as redemption, or better, reconciliation. From our evidence in anthropology, in the Scriptures and in our own experience, we can say that men are conscious at one and the same time that they are sinners and that they are made in the image of God. This kinship with God is an affinity in personal and spiritual likeness. Thus, the term "spirit" is frequently used to designate that ultimate essence of personality known in philosophy as the "ego," and in religion as the "soul." The spirit of man as his inmost personal being is the veritable point of contact between God and man; for there God as Spirit meets us as spirits. It is the Spirit that beareth witness with our spirits<sup>5</sup> in a personal relation which draws the sinner into the presence of Christ, where, seeing himself in the light of the supreme norm, he recognizes his sin and failure and at the same time realizes at last that spiritual power is at hand for his reconciliation, namely undefeatable love. Psychology affirms this Christian conviction that we are not living at our best, that there are reservoirs of power which lie untapped in the depths of our personality, that these living waters can be set free, and that an integration of self around a religious center is the surest way to such release. But there is no magic in the way of the Spirit's working with men. It has become increasingly clear that even among men the vital contact which influences life comes through the touch of one spirit with another spirit.

This brings us face to face with belief in the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The New Testament writers speak of being "sent forth by the Spirit," "led of the Spirit" and "pressed by the Spirit." Probably the question for us as Christian ministers is not "Does the Spirit Guide?" We accept the evidence of anthropology, Scripture, history and personal experience. We want to know if this guidance is a specific and detailed direction, or an attitude-changing influence. Let it be said then,

<sup>5</sup> I John 5:6.

that in the realm of personal relationship *no* compulsion is exercised by one spirit upon another spirit. The method is always contagion, persuasion and inspiration. It follows that God's Spirit, in His relationship with us as spirits does not abrogate our freedom by taking out of our hands the decisions of the hour. What we experience is a divine companionship. In this succoring presence we find our outlook so changed that our wills move in harmony with the purpose of God, and thus our decisions are "guided" in regard to the specific details of the moment. It was while Peter "thought on the vision" that the Spirit spoke to him. It was while Philip was following "an angel of the Lord" that he heard the voice of the Spirit. The guidance of the Holy Spirit comes by way of a personal relationship of the soul with God as Spirit with spirit.

In the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* the conversion of men is attributed to this guidance of the Holy Spirit. "We are made partakers of redemption . . . , by the effectual application of it to us by (the) Holy Spirit."<sup>6</sup> Paul states the position tersely when he says, "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit."<sup>7</sup> Psychologically the effectual calling of God is a slowly maturing process leading to a point of illumination, as is seen, for example, in the conversion of Saint Paul. Within the life of the individual the Holy Spirit speaks to us and guides us by our relation to that which is true, holy and loving. It is the presence of this prior influence which makes possible our response to the Person of Jesus Christ. As the personal agent of God's grace the Holy Spirit constantly broods over the souls of men, and has so brooded since the beginning of human life. The pentecostal outpouring marked not the beginning of the Spirit's work in the lives of men, but the consummation of the connection between the work of the Spirit and the work of Christ. Henceforward the Holy Spirit was known as the personal voice which called men to follow Christ. The outpouring of God's Spirit in the normal human experience of life transformation is likewise an experience of being drawn by the personal influence of the Spirit into the presence of Christ. Conversion is thus no radical change of substance whereby the old man becomes a new man in essential essence. It is a change of insight, a change of direction. We remain the same persons but we see life in a different light because we are convicted of sin, and because we are filled with the desire to be Christlike. The

<sup>6</sup> *Westminster Shorter Catechism* Ans. 29.

<sup>7</sup> I Corinthians 12:3.

revelation of Christ is itself the efficient cause of this new attitude when the Holy Spirit has drawn us to the feet of the Master. The Spirit is God Himself working within us persuading and enabling us to accept and follow His objective self-disclosure in His Son.

The experience of repentance and faith constitutes the response of the human spirit to this Self-revelation of God. Being the answer of one personal being to another personal being, it is a moral and personal response. To begin the new life is to enter into a personal relationship with God based on utter truth and trust. By the contact of one perfectly holy and supremely loving personality with our sinful personalities the miracle of transformation is wrought. As God's Fatherly care is mediated by God's Spirit to men's spirits in a personal relation of divine companionship men experience, the dual sense of personal unworthiness and divine commission. Here is the most vital work of the Holy Spirit in the transformation of human personality, which, although now more deeply conscious of its weakness than ever before, possesses at last the will "to build above the deep intent, the deed, the deed."

We are moving on the plane of personal intercourse and therefore abandon the mechanical approach. Our closest human analogy to the work of the Spirit in individual life is the affection of husband and wife or mother and child. These relationships give us a faint suggestion of the way in which one spirit can influence another spirit by an interpenetration of personal life through contagion, persuasion and inspiration. It is just such an interpenetration of the Holy Spirit with our spirits which, in the presence of Christ, calls forth repentance and that personal self-commitment, confidence and trust which we term faith.

The divine initiative by which God "sent forth the Spirit of his Son into (our) hearts"<sup>8</sup> to redeem, continues therein to sanctify. These are old-fashioned words, but I know no better terms for the vivid realities on which they focus our attention. Swete says, "No one term so fully covers the effects upon human nature of the presence in it of the Holy Spirit of God as the word 'sanctification.'"<sup>9</sup> The experience of the Holy Spirit as recorded in the Epistles and as known in our own lives is an awareness of a divine influence working for the progressive spiritualization of our lives. This experience is called in the New Testament, dwelling "in Christ," or being "filled with the Holy Spirit." Theo-

<sup>8</sup> Galatians 4:6.

<sup>9</sup> Swete op. cit., p. 345.

logians have often termed it living "in a state of grace." By whatever name it is known, the experience is one and the same. It is the sense of so living in fellowship with God that his divine life is reflected in our human lives so that we become radiant "living epistles of the gospel," possessed by a sense of harmony with God, the world, our fellows and ourselves. This experience of victorious living has shone in the faces of all saints, radiates from the lives of consecrated men and women in our several churches, and will always characterize Christlike souls. The Holy Spirit is God evidencing himself in fatherly succor which enables us to triumph over the problems of our world, to meet the challenge of society and to master the inner conflicts to which we are subject.

Here again the activity of the Spirit is personal. Even as our reconciliation is not accomplished by arbitrary fiat of irresistible might, so too our sanctification is not achieved by the resistless decree of an almighty tyrant. The end in view is a personal end, a blessed fellowship of free personal spirits. No impersonal methods can achieve that purpose. Further, the sphere in which the Holy Spirit operates is not delimited by any crass conception of divided personality. All that there is of personal human life is open to the influence of the Holy Spirit, and in the life of the man "in Christ" is made glorious by the light of His presence as meadows and hillsides are made bright by the sunshine of spring. It cannot be too often repeated that the Holy Spirit is God, personally at work in the life of man. In sanctification that means a never-failing Divine Companionship leading men to successively higher levels of Christlike life, "enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness."<sup>10</sup>

It is not within the province of this paper to detail the results of this divine companionship in the life of men. But to round out our presentation of the experience of the Spirit in the life of the individual we need to take note of the most striking accompaniment of sanctification, namely a sense of increased power. In the New Testament we read, "ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you."<sup>11</sup> The witness of Christian lives everywhere affirms the testimony of Luke. Not long ago a luminous proof of this truth stood before us. Kagawa, stricken by disease, carrying a hundred impossible tasks upon his shoulders, gave living testimony to a power from beyond which has entered

<sup>10</sup> *Westminster Shorter Catechism* Ans. 35.

<sup>11</sup> Acts 1:8; see also Luke 1:17, 35; Romans 15:13, 19; Acts 6:10; Revelations 11:11; I Corinthians 2:4; Acts 19:6; 2:4; 4:8; 8:19.



into his life and given him incredible vitality and zeal. At times our own hearts have burned within us as we knew ourselves led up of the Spirit to some great Jerusalem. Power like that comes when subversive influences are conquered and a great central loyalty holds us in unity of purpose with God. When we are thus knit into His fellowship we no longer rely on ourselves alone, but draw on the riches of God's Spirit.

Once more, the personal nature of the relationship is the key to its amazing quality. Even among men the influence of winsome and commanding personalities makes possible in lesser lives what formerly was impossible. If enhancement of life power can come by the agency of human intercourse, how much more shall your Father in heaven give power to those who live in personal fellowship with Him through the contact of His Spirit with our spirits!

*In the life of the individual the Holy Spirit is God at work as a personal Spirit dealing with men as personal spirits.* It is the testimony of the New Testament and of Christian experience that this Holy Spirit is the guide who persuades and enables men to accept and follow Christ, and who, as the divine companion, leads men to ever-increasing victory over sin and ever-richer fellowship with God. The characteristic mark of the Holy Spirit is His personal nature as the living, active manifestation of a God of grace, dealing with men as Spirit with spirits, as Person with persons.

#### IV

There is a further experience of this personal Holy Spirit in the life of the group, and to this we now turn.

Oxford and Edinburgh have caused us to rethink our conception of the Church, and of the function of the Church in Society. In this process it is of crucial importance to keep before our minds the experience of the Holy Spirit in the Church.

The Church is the vehicle of the Spirit's activity. It is not merely the outcome of man's fundamental gregariousness, but is the medium of God's Spirit, apart from which we cannot know God. Men are social beings, and their redemption, therefore, is accomplished by social means. An analysis of our own Christian experience confirms this view: for it is only in and through the Church that the Holy Spirit has led us to knowledge of the gospel and subsequent sanctification of life. Any moral and religious stature which we possess has been won in and through contact with other and greater persons in the shadow of whose character

and faith we have come forward. Although it is clear that God's purposes for the building of His Kingdom cannot be fulfilled in a sinful society, nevertheless, since we are personal and communal beings, some societal order is essential for the accomplishment of God's ends. The Church is this new society. It is the veritable organism of the Christian life in and through which the work of the Holy Spirit is accomplished in the individual and in society.

The primary characteristic of the Church is a common experience of fellowship. This vital contact of man with man and man with God Schleiermacher calls "the common spirit of the Church." To him "The Holy Spirit is the union of the divine essence with human nature in the form of the common spirit animating the life in common of believers."<sup>12</sup> In this common experience of the indwelling Holy Spirit lies our truest basis for real church unity. This is the essential oneness of a living organism, as compared with the superficial oneness of a mechanical organization. In the New Testament we have before us a Church which is the corporate life of men and women holding a common belief in Jesus Christ, and knowing themselves to be animated by a common possession of the Holy Spirit. It is this spiritual fellowship which makes a church part of the Church. It is in this Fellowship of the Spirit that men are enabled to find ever richer communion with God, fuller development of self and greater service to others.

If the Church is primarily the Fellowship of the Spirit the nature of the Church must be such that it is a worthy medium for the furtherance of the Spirit's personal work in individual and societal life. Thus the Church will be found to be *one, holy, catholic* and *apostolic* according to the witness of a living experience rather than to the demands of an ecclesiastical system.

At no point does the dogmatism of the human mind express itself more markedly than in the promulgation and defense of doctrines about the Church. In creeds, catechisms or expositions thereof, Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic and High Anglican Christians all declare that the work of the Holy Spirit is accomplished on earth through one visible medium, which they claim to be. Let it first be remarked that unity does not characterize any one of these three. For centuries the Eastern Orthodox has been sundered into national churches. The Roman Catholic communion is divided into orders and congregations which may

<sup>12</sup> *The Christian Faith*, T. & T. Clark, p. 569.

well be compared with our Protestant sects. High Anglican exclusiveness is a logical anomaly, since Rome is recognized as being also the true church. The difficulty with these positions is the impersonal view of the nature of unity upon which they are based. The only oneness worth having is a oneness with God through a common experience of the Holy Spirit. This experience is essentially personal, and cannot be organizationally delimited. The unity of the Church as the Body of Christ is unity in His Spirit. This unity *may* come to organizational expression. But regardless of that, wherever the Spirit of Christ is, there is the Church. This is the witness of living Christian experience. It is in this sense that the Church is *One*.

The Church as the fellowship of the Spirit is termed *Holy*, not because she has custody of a divine potency called grace, but because of the presence in her of the Holy Spirit as the cleansing, renewing and sanctifying Agent of God in working out the rebuilding of individual and societal life. The Church is *Holy* because she is the Church of the Holy Spirit.

The Church is *Catholic*. Once again certain sectors claim exclusive right to the title, and some of our brethren are so impressed with the claim that they turn with longing eyes toward organizational reunion. Reunion of Christendom is devoutly to be sought, but real catholicity will never be found on a purely organizational basis. Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic ceased long ago to be truly "Catholic." Variations of both doctrine and government appeared very early and continue to the present day. The word "Catholic" is the rightful designation of the Church as the organism of the Spirit's operation. Because this Spirit is *universally the same* in all ages, places and people, the Church in which He dwells is rightly called the *Catholic* Church.

The Church is *Apostolic*. Here is the crux of the whole matter. Is the power of the Holy Spirit to convey grace exercised only by those upon whom consecrated hands have been laid, in an unbroken succession since Saint Peter? Surely it is sheer ignorance of historical facts or willful disregard of the same to be unaware of the numerous breaks in the line of succession. Further, to maintain that such a succession is essential to the efficacy of sacrament or solace makes the activity of God's Holy Spirit dependent upon exact formulae and a particular priesthood, makes it, that is to say, *impersonal* in operation. *Apostolicity is a personal and inner experience*. It is continuance in the faith of the first apostles and

openness to the progressive revelation of the Holy Spirit. This apostolicity finds notable expression in the visible Church, but its real nature is oneness of spirit rather than oneness of formulae or authenticity of priestly succession. Its true representatives are *all* followers of Christ who live in the fellowship of the Spirit. Thus the ministry is an office rather than an order. The minister is a man, called of God in his own conscience, and set apart by the fellowship under the guidance of the Spirit. The divine element in the ministry is something moral and personal. It is a closeness of personal communion with the Holy Spirit which issues in work done in harmony with God's will. The gospel of God's grace is to be proclaimed by the personal witness of those who live under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. As Bishop Ridding said, "God's magnet is a man of God electrified by the *Spirit of God*."

The Church which is the fellowship of the Spirit *is* one, holy, catholic and apostolic. Its true unity lies in its possession of a common spirit. Because this is God's Holy Spirit the Church is Holy, because that Spirit is in all believers of every place, time and sect the Church is Catholic, and because that Spirit is the persisting witness to God's revelation in Christ the Church is apostolic. Where the experience of common fellowship with God's Spirit is present, there is the Church. Outside the fellowship communion with the Holy Spirit is not found, either in the New Testament or in our own lives. It is the possession of the individual as a member of a believing fellowship.

As the fellowship of the Spirit the Church inherits the promise of power and guidance. Modern psychology helps us to understand the initial experience in the Pentecostal speaking with tongues. Powerful emotions and great ideas were struggling for expression through inadequate personal media and so burst forth in strange utterances resembling articulate speech. But more important than the explanations of psychology is the fact that this outpouring marked the beginning of a new experience in which consciousness of divine direction was accompanied by the possession of extraordinary power. Weak, spineless men became courageous flaming epistles of the gospel. A despairing band of fearful disciples became bold evangelists. Across the years a constant access of creative life-power was experienced in the early Church. Moreover, under the guidance of the Spirit missionaries were sent out, the canon was formed and accepted, the message of the gospel was confirmed and

the Word of Truth itself was interpreted. If the churches of our day lack power or feel uncertain of their message, let them turn from an over-concern with matters material *as* material and renew their primal experience in the fellowship of the Spirit. The experience of the apostles, of the early Church, and of all who follow in the Way is that new revelations and new powers come in the fellowship of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit leads us into all truth.

The presence of the Holy Spirit in the fellowship has been particularly felt by most Christians in the Sacraments, which for us are specifically baptism and the Lord's Supper. Here again experience has dictated the necessity for doctrine. From the first the influence of the Spirit had a connection with Baptism, and in the *ἀγάπη* there was a keen awareness of the Spirit's presence. When we ourselves truly participate in these sacraments of the fellowship, we experience a triple sense, of corporate spiritual oneness, of individual life enhancement and of divine commission. Back of the experience is the work of the Holy Spirit in the Sacraments. This has for its context the sacramental character of all personal life at its highest. Sacraments are a language of action,<sup>13</sup> essential to the expression of the deepest things of the soul. On every high level of personal life when words fail we express our deepest thoughts, feelings and purposes by other symbols, that which is seen standing for that which is real but unseen; the handclasp for abiding friendship, the kiss for true affection, the marriage ring for unfailing fidelity. The necessity of symbol and sacrament is a safeguard to personal life; for it preserves the frontiers of the self by limiting the extent to which invasion is possible. Not even God can overrule the freedom of the human soul. In the intimate, personal, sacred fellowship of God and men in the Sacraments of the Church, symbolic means of expression rightly are used to manifest to our human senses the unseen reality of the Eternal, in such manner that we are able to receive God's Spirit and profit thereby without being overwhelmed. In all close relationships of person to person symbols and sacraments have an essential place. In the communion of the divine Person with human persons symbols and sacraments are the rich and needful media of inspiration. Thus, in baptism, historic association and precious symbolism unite to signalize cleansing from sin, membership in the Church and consecration to the Christian way of life. The Lord's Supper is a rite of the fellowship,

<sup>13</sup> See Streeter, *The Spirit*, essay by Miss Lily Dougall.



wherein those who live under the guidance of the Holy Spirit assimilate the word by symbolic means, renew their consecration to God and His tasks, and express the oneness of the Church in faith and service. In this sense corporate prayer is likewise sacramental in character. Herein the fellowship turns to God in the Spirit. All magical or impersonal interpretations are ruled out. *The Sacraments are means of personal intercourse* wherein the Holy Spirit of the Most High communes with the spirits of men in the Church by the media of symbols.

The Church, of course, exists to perform a task. The Holy Spirit is God working in the Church for the redemption not only of individuals but also of society. In the fellowship, God as Holy Spirit leads us to the conscious, eager acceptance of His will that *all* shall be united in a divine order of mutual love, righteousness and service. By the contagion of His Spirit of redeeming love we are inspired to work for the coming of the Kingdom of God.

This Kingdom of God is not a man-made social order. It is communal and men *are* the members of its societal body, but it is founded and sustained by God. The opposition between the ethical and eschatological conceptions of the Kingdom is apparent more than actual, and rests on the inadequate assumption that everything in this present life is to be accomplished by men, and all in the life to come is to be the work of God. The Kingdom of God is not so; but is both present and future. God's care for His children is eternal, and our development into His likeness never ceases. A shallow interpretation which sees the Kingdom of God in the upward thrust of "progress" or the unfolding of "the Christian ideal" neglects the all-important fact that we come to value our fellows as brethren only through seeing their value to God.

The Church as the vehicle of the Spirit's activity is the Kingdom of God on earth. And, as Barry reminds us, "The prime condition of entering the Kingdom is to share the standpoint of the King; and that involves being reborn into it."<sup>14</sup> It follows that, if a new world is to be constructed on earth, the basis of its "social gospel" must be a personal relationship to God in penitence and faith. Hence also, the Divine Order is to be built through the medium of the Church; for through that fellowship alone is the work of the Holy Spirit possible. Those who, through the Spirit, share the standpoint of the King are members of the Kingdom here and now. This Kingdom of God on earth, wherein

<sup>14</sup> E. R. Barry, *The Relevance of Christianity*, p. 7.

we taste the liberty of God's children under the power and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, exists in a sinful society as the medium for the work of the Spirit in the redemption of that communal order. As God Himself cannot suffer one sinner to go unsuccored, so we, partaking of His Holy Spirit, enter His Kingdom when we are unwilling that any part of mankind or any area of life should be lost. Therefore we bend every effort to save all. This is the function of the fellowship.

Our oneness with God in the fellowship is begun here, but it is continued hereafter. Eternal Life in the Christian sense is preceded by a reconciliation to God effected in the believer by the Holy Spirit here and now. As we live in the one, holy, catholic and apostolic fellowship, and as we produce good works by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the fullness of this blessed life is such that mere temporal existence is too small to hold it. Consequently, our best assurance of a blessed hereafter in the spiritual realm is present life and work in the fellowship of God's Spirit. Thus it is never our desire as Christians to escape from the world, however evil and fraught with danger life may be. Our fervent aspiration is to live in mastery over the world. When we live in the fellowship of God's Spirit so immediately and so constantly that God's fatherliness is reflected in us we are assured that the future life promises a valid fruition of all that is personal and spiritual. It is that realm of being where, freed from the encumbrances of earth, we may see the Father face to face, as spirit with Spirit, as person with Person. "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you."<sup>15</sup>

"God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship Him in Spirit and in truth." The whole universe is a manifestation of spirit. In spirit is the life of the world unified, the life of men freed from diffinities, and the love of God made effective in the life of the individual and the life of the group. The spirit has been known in all ages and places, but is especially known to Christians as the Holy Spirit, God in grace, calling, enlightening, persuading, enabling, guiding, sanctifying, uniting, inspiring and preserving men. He is essentially personal, working in the sphere of personal relations, using the means of personal intercourse, drawing us toward the personal consummation of a liberated fellowship of the Spirit in the radiant presence of the eternal Father.

<sup>15</sup> Romans 8:11.

# History Made and in the Making

WALTER RUSSELL BOWIE

**I**N THE Autumn number of RELIGION IN LIFE the article on current books was entitled "American Heritage," and began with a review of a book which dealt with the American frontier. This article, it so happens, may begin in somewhat similar fashion.

*The Shining Trail*, by Iola Fuller, who previously wrote *The Loon Feather*, is the story of the last great effort, a century ago, of the Indians in the northern Mississippi Valley to drive back the white men who were pressing in upon their lands. It is a part of history which has its tragic interest, but certainly does not leave much room for pride. Into the American heritage there have entered high elements of adventurous daring, hardihood and courage; but there have entered also greed and cruelty and remorseless violence. Many of those who pushed the frontier forward were more savage than the "savages," and *The Shining Trail* is a reminder of the brutal facts upon which some of our civilization has been built. In this present time there is value in recalling that. We have a smug way often of criticizing the sins of other nations and forgetting the record of our own. We give lordly advice, for example, to the British Empire, and recommend idealistic principles for dealing with subject races as assuredly as though we had followed them impeccably ourselves—we who treated the Indians with conscienceless contempt, and who today have shown ourselves capable on occasion of brutalities toward Negroes and other minority peoples which belie our good professions. This does not mean that the ideals we recognize are any the less true or ultimately any the less commanding; but it means that if we are to have the right to voice them there must come into our national spirit more humility and a more honest concern for those primitive passions in us which we have as yet so imperfectly tamed.

The foregoing reflections, set in motion by *The Shining Trail*, are not meant to suggest, however, that this book is some sort of sociological treatise. It is no such ponderous thing. If it provokes serious thoughts, that is because it is rooted in realities which are too solid to be casually passed over. But it is a novel, written and meant to be read for the sheer interest of the picture it draws and the story it tells.

As such, the book has clear excellences, and equally evident and curi-

ous faults. First of all and most important, it creates an atmosphere—the atmosphere of other times and places which for the moment become the reader's own. The frontier has always had a tingling fascination, and innumerable children here in these United States have dressed up to play Indians and to carry out their secret imaginings of the kind of things that Indians would do. Here in Iola Fuller's book the grown-up man or woman who still keeps some of that earlier wonder of the child may feel as though the old desire were satisfied; for the world of the Indian comes to life around us, and we walk the trails of the moccasined feet. To say that there is fine description in the book would be to put the fact too dully. It is not that scenes which once existed are described; rather they are evoked, and one moves in the midst of them, breathing the air of the virginal lands, feeling the spell of the silent forest or hearing the hoofs of the buffalo on the prairie, smelling the smoke of Indian fires, watching the painted faces of warriors in the war dance or listening to the grave talk in the council lodge, leaving behind the white man's world and entering into the world of the Indian's mind, with its nearness to bird and beast and sun and rain and wind and to all elemental things. Against this background move the figures of the story: Black Hawk, the war chief of the Sauks; Tomah, who in a battle with the Sioux, killed the leading warrior and brought back from his tepee the woman whose child was to grow up among the Sauks but become at the dramatic climax of the story the messianic leader of the Sioux; Keokuk, the double-faced, who would sell out the Sauk lands to the white man; Four Bears and Lone Panther; and white traders and soldiers, against whom Black Hawk and the braves he rallied round him wage their desperate and losing fight.

In its setting and in its story, therefore, this is a good novel. Its defects are that it is too long, and that it has too much sentimental tremolo. Sometimes, and unhappily near the climax, also, the action drags. And, with the best will in the world, the reader will find it difficult to think that even the most exalted specimen of "the noble red man" ever spoke such ornately noble utterances as those which are the everyday conversation of Black Hawk and his friends. They sound like a blend of Epictetus and Sir Philip Sidney, or like the Homeric representation of Hector and the other heroes at the siege of Troy. Which is to say that *The Shining Trail* would be a better book than it is if it had been furnished with fewer rhetorical halos.

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Another recent novel which is part history and part fiction is Hugh Walpole's *Katherine Christian*. Its scenes are laid in England, beginning with the year when Elizabeth, the great Queen, died and James the First came down from Scotland to succeed her. As Nicholas Herries mused: "Elizabeth had been a grand experience for her countrymen, who had never known from one day to another what the next event might be. She had been always unexpected; the only two sure expectations concerning her—that she would be either assassinated or married—had both been disappointed. Through these expectations, however, the thought of her had always been interesting. Now there *were* no expectations any more!" In her place was the shrewd but mean and dowdy newcomer, a king from whose person came "a stale odor as of manure and mice and straw," who wore a quilted doublet and stuffed breeches for fear of a dagger thrust, and who "waddled like a duck." Life was to lose the great savor of the Elizabethan days in the reign of this first Stuart, and drift to the disintegration and the internal strife which culminated in the Civil Wars and the beheading of James's son, King Charles.

There are lively characters in the book: Nicholas Herries, the head of the family which appears in other novels of Walpole, and Robert, his son, and his younger cousins, Rashleigh, Lucy and Peter Garland; Matt Turner, the would-be poet; and above all, Katherine Christian, daughter of a magician, gypsy and adventuress by birth and early circumstance, brilliant and beautiful and daring by her own right. There are colorful pictures of English scenes and English life, particularly in the north country round the lakes and in post-Elizabethan London where there was "always movement and stench and bustle, with the smells malodorous, stomach-tickling, damp-ridden, rat-poisoned, flower-fragrant (as with roses, carnations, sweet-williams), and the voices crying and shouting, cursing and kissing, singing and bewailing." There are powerful descriptions also of some of the figures who belonged to the actual history of the times: Strafford going to his execution in the Tower, Charles I caught in the net of complications that would bring him to his death, Oliver Cromwell disciplining his Ironsides. But the book as a whole is poorly organized and incomplete. Probably Walpole meant it to work out to some clear end as a drama of conflicting loyalties, between the king's men as represented by Rashleigh Garland and the Puritans as represented by his younger brother Peter, and with the other characters finally magnetized toward one or the other of those two poles; but Walpole died



before the book was carried through, and although the publishers state that "they owe it to the author's memory to . . . offer this novel to the public as it stands," it must be recognized that what does stand is something fragmentary and unfinished.

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*Spearhead*, by John Brophy, makes good reading, though it is by no means the "magnificent and thrilling novel" which the paper jacket announces it to be. The central theme of it is the long-familiar one of the unexpected and supposedly unlikely man in the rear ranks who steps out into the front, the shy man who becomes the hero. Also, without any very convincing explanation, the leading lady falls promptly and impetuously in love with him, in a manner that smacks more of romantic melodrama than of an interplay of character that would seem real. Moreover, this book suffers from one's realization that in the field of action which it covers fiction is much less interesting and exciting than the actual records of contemporary fact. For *Spearhead* is a novel about the training of British Commandos, and of a raid they make in Norway and another for the demolition of a German radio station in France. The pulses quicken as one follows these intrepid youngsters who yet seem so incredibly old and wise in the ways of war, and anyone who wants to have his imagination stirred and his wonder kindled at the kind of reckless courage which a generation once supposed to have grown soft now exhibits will read John Brophy's book with satisfaction—provided there does not insinuate itself too much into his mind the question as to whether a novel about imaginary Commandos is as worth while as the available books about what real Commandos are doing and have done.

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Among the books having to do with the war which are not fiction but fact is *Malta Spitfire*, the story of a fighter pilot. It is told largely in the first person in the graphic and unconventional words of the young flying officer, George F. Beurling, whose experiences it recounts, and there are comments and undoubtedly some shaping up of the material by Leslie Roberts. "This book," as the introduction says, "is about a young man with a single-track mind"—one of that amazing group from the youth of many nations who have lived and breathed in the new element of the air, and as to whom one wonders what they will be doing when the terrific fascination of combat has ceased. George Beurling, from the earliest time

he can remember, was possessed by the sight and sound of airplanes. Living near Montreal, he hung around the outskirts of an air field and one day made friends with a flyer who offered to take him up in a plane. From that time on, waking or sleeping, the idea of flying filled his imagination. By the time he was fourteen, he was selling papers and magazines, running errands and doing whatever else he could to scrape together enough money for flying lessons. It would take him a month to earn \$10.00, which was the fee for one hour's flight instruction. But he learned to fly. Then came the war, and he thought the way ahead to be a flyer now was easy. But as a matter of fact, it proved to be a hard road full of jolts and difficulties. He tried to get to China and was arrested by American immigration officials on his way to San Francisco. He tried to enlist for Finland and his parents blocked it. He went to England on a tramp steamer to get into the R.A.F. and was refused because he had no birth certificate. But he made the round trip of the Atlantic again, returned with a birth certificate, got into the R.A.F., and presently found himself in one of the squadrons that defended the Island of Malta, the most bombed spot on earth. The book is a description of the combat flights he and other boys like him made. "Some of Beurling's examiners have spoken of him in print as a cold-blooded killer," says Leslie Roberts in the introduction. But a truer comment upon him was made in these words: "He is only a killer in that he has schooled himself to be technically perfect . . . he is a lad who is nuts about flying and completely preoccupied with the precise technique of flying and severely critical of sloppy flying by anybody else, be he German, Italian or British." And well along in the book are these words of Beurling's as he was reflecting one day about the future: "Would a guy stay in the Air Force if he could? Would he go looking for somebody else's war, or become an international flying policeman, if that's the way they sugar it off? Would he go into commercial aviation, or try to start a show of his own, or what? One thing was sure, we agreed. It had to be some kind of flying."

Part of grim paradox of war is the fact that the amazing resourcefulness, daring and unbounded courage which the young men of many nations have exhibited are linked with mutual killing and destruction. The great question is as to how these qualities, which have in them so much heroism, can actually be employed in peace.

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A novel which was a Literary Guild selection, and which was given for a time the kind of publicity which indicated the hope that it might blossom

into a best-seller, is *Centennial Summer*. It is the story of a Philadelphia family in 1876, when the Centennial Exposition was giving America, and Philadelphia in particular, a chance to flap its wings. Its publisher describes it as "packed with high humor and a full complement of richly drawn characters." One would like to be able to say that those words are true, but they have in them considerable exaggeration. There are plenty of people in the book whom the author tries hard to make vivid, but he tries so hard that the effect is overstrained. Comparison is almost inevitable with the kind of domestic descriptions which are familiar in *Life With Father*, which also has to do with the same sort of mid-Victorian life and manners which form the atmosphere of *Centennial Summer*; and the latter book suffers by comparison because its humor lacks subtlety and verges instead toward slap-stick burlesque. Nevertheless, it should be cheerfully admitted that a writer does not have to be as nearly a genius as was Clarence Day to make an entertaining book; and *Centennial Summer*, although it will never set the literary world on fire, is a diverting and amusing tale of Mr. Jesse Rogers, the Philadelphia Quaker who married "out of Meeting," of his Italian wife and their tempestuous children, of their Philadelphia neighbors, and especially of Aunt Zena, Mrs. Rogers' sister who came on a visit from Paris, bringing with her a highly unconventional record and flamboyant habits which turned the Philadelphia household upside down.

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The only thing additional which one could wish for in *A Sense of Humus* is that "Grandma" might be in it; for Bertha Damon, who wrote it, was the author also of *Grandma Called It Carnal*, concerning that straight-backed old lady who in her New England hardihood, her inflexible principles, and her shrewd ability to direct affairs and to manage people (even if *not* always Juno, the cow!) was a character never to be forgotten. This particular reviewer may as well confess that when he began to read *A Sense of Humus* and found that "Grandma" had no part in it he felt a sort of flatness, and almost made up his mind that he would not like the book. But from this idea he quickly and thoroughly recovered. Grandma or no Grandma, this is a book which is wholly delightful in its own right. In "Samule," the hired man, the tang of dry New England humor salts the pages; and Uncle John Stentor, who lives with the Damons, is funny just because he is so satisfied with himself that it would never occur to him that he could be funny at all. "The gospel according to Uncle John is that no one who makes less than forty thousand a year

can say anything he wants to listen to. When a guest of moderate income once made some general remark concerning the true values of life, 'In my opinion,' said Uncle John, piercing the speaker with a glance that was not so fixed that it did not manage to rotate and include me, 'in my opinion, persons who have not made a considerable amount of money are not qualified to judge what may be the true values of life.'"

The charm of this book (enhanced by its six colored illustrations) is that it deals with the simple and everlasting things. There is no plot in it. There are no wars or rumors of wars. It is as undisturbed by contemporary tumults as the granite of the New Hampshire hills which are its background, or the deeper waters of New Hampshire lakes. It tells about what Bertha Damon did to bring something gentle and lovely out of the hard and shallow soil round the old house where she and her husband had settled, about the comings of spring and ploughing and planting the garden, about her dogs, about some of the neighbors as seen through her own or "Samule's" eyes, and about that haunting "association value"—as she calls it—which everyone will understand who has felt in rural New England the lingering atmosphere of a vanished time and a vanished life that have left their wistful reminders in old roads fading into green underbrush, in rock walls that no longer border any pastures, in cellars and foundations of what once were houses, with perhaps lilacs still growing where used to be the door. "Our acres," writes Bertha Damon, "have been humanized; they entered long ago into the alliance with man which Bacon insisted was a fundamental condition of beauty, *homo additus naturae*. Generations of people have lived on them. . . . The pine houses the Oldtimers built are gone, all but one; the cellar holes they walled with stones from their fields are overgrown; the stone fences they piled up are tumbled down; the roads they made go nowhere; even the land they cleared is covered again with woods. Yet there is something the pines whisper, something of which I am conscious as I work."

So it would be possible to write much about *A Sense of Humus*, and all of it enthusiastic. But the essence of it cannot be conveyed in snatches, or at secondhand. Read it: that is the best counsel a reviewer can give. And when one has read it, even though it may be winter in his world, he may echo in his own spirit the last words which are written on its last page: "I closed the book and turned out the light. I heard the wind making a furious roar through the unyielding pines, heard 'the

unspeakable rain, mingled with rattling snow against the windows, preparing the ground for spring.'"

**The Shining Trail.** By IOLA FULLER. New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1943. pp. 442. \$3.00.

**Katherine Christian.** By HUGH WALPOLE. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, 1943. pp. 313. \$2.50.

**Spearhead.** By JOHN BROPHY. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1943. pp. 277. \$2.50.

**Malta Spitfire.** By GEORGE F. BEURLING. New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1943. pp. 235. \$2.50.

**Centennial Summer.** By ALBERT E. IDELL. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1943. pp. 426. \$2.75.

**A Sense of Humus.** By BERTHA DAMON; illustrated by Claire Leighton. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1943. pp. 250. \$2.50.

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## Book Reviews

**God and Evil.** By C. E. M. JOAD. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1943.  
pp. 349. \$3.00.

I know Doctor Joad personally. I have talked with him in his study about religion in life. I have eaten his salt. This being so, it seems churlish to criticize his book adversely, yet I fear that I cannot praise it with any sincerity. For a time, through his activity on the "Brains Trust" organized by the B.B.C., Doctor Joad had much limelight and anything he wrote was certain of the immense sale which this book had at its publication. At the present time, however, his popularity has waned, and I have scarcely heard his book mentioned for months. The influence of the book, if my judgment is worth anything, is ephemeral. Personally I cannot help feeling that Joad finds it cathartic to express in writing the seething tumult of his mind. So, when after denying God for thirty years Joad finds Him a place in his universe, he finds it useful and not unprofitable to express himself in a book. Frankly, little will be learned from the book about God and little about the nature of Evil.

This is not surprising when the book is studied, for it is less a book about God than about Joad. Anyone who writes a book about God is entitled, of course, to become autobiographical, but, for long stretches, the author gives us autobiographical material which is strangely irrelevant to his theme.

That theme is roughly as follows. The author believed that a sufficient answer to the problem of evil could be found in the psychological frustration which followed from traumatic experiences in childhood, or else the social injustice and oppression which hindered man from realizing his possibilities. These factors, singly or together, accounted adequately, Joad thought, for evil in the world. Indeed, he once told me that he thought that a sufficient number of psychoanalyzed communists could build the Utopia of men's dreams. Then the fact of evil weighed heavily on his mind. It was too vast and too terrible to submit to such simple explanations. The Nazi régime made the problem poignant. It was incredible that the factors named, and hitherto thought sufficient, could account for the bestiality which broke out in Europe under Hitler. The case against God was a strong one in Joad's view, but to dismiss God made the situation worse, and the problem not only unsolvable but intolerable. There *must* be some help for man to help him out of the grip of evil which seemed otherwise to overwhelm him, evil which now seemed to Joad "endemic in the heart of man."

So Joad came to believe intellectually in God. He cannot, however, accept any view of Christ which any kind of Christian would recognize. He says (p. 302), "the claim to the uniqueness of the personality of Christ and the events connected with His birth and death and the claim to uniqueness" are stumbling blocks. Some years ago in *The Spectator* he wrote an article on the violence of Jesus, the gist of which he repeats in the volume under review. In the latter Joad writes of our Lord as follows (pp. 319 and 322):

"He [Christ] is touchily sensitive and liable to break out into torrents of denunciation on what seems to me very inadequate provocation. . . . One

wonders whether, if Christ had been a little more intellectual, His utterances would have been quite so obscure."

Saint Paul is dismissed with, "I find Pauline theology distasteful and forbidding" (p. 325). Saint John is dismissed with the word "obscure" (p. 326). The position of Mr. C. S. Lewis, recently converted to Christianity, is given much space. And Mr. Edwyn Bevan's views are given a more important place than Saint Paul. I do not say this in any depreciative spirit of the two writers named. I only express astonishment that an examination of their positions should be supposed, by implication, to be an examination of the entire grounds on which Christianity stands. As Dean Matthews of Saint Paul's wrote sarcastically in *The Spectator*, "There is internal evidence that he has spent at least six shillings on the study of the Christian Religion."

One who sets out to examine the bases of the Christian religion might reasonably be expected to go to fundamental sources in a way which Joad does not. I would like to invite Doctor Joad to study the Gospels under any competent scholar like Dodd or Manson, to read the fathers and the lives of the saints, and to realize how powerful an evidence for the truth of the Christian religion is to be found in the lives of men like Schweitzer and Grenfell, not only because of what Christ did in their lives but what He has done through them, and others like them, in the lives of countless others, men and women of all races and all ages.

Frankly, it seems to me pathetic that this lovable, if rather self-important man, should become a spiritual exhibitionist, giving us as he does a list of his sins, filling pages with his intellectual doubts, and closing a book which should never have been written while he was still in the middle of the process of finding his way to personal experience of God. I wish him everything good, but I hope he won't write again until he has arrived. And he will get where he sincerely wants to be if, instead of metaphysics, he looks into the lives of a few humble people, sheds his own intellectual pride, gets down on his knees and asks God to do for him and in him what He has done for many a simple char-woman, for many a dark-skinned African, and, incidentally, for many of the parsons whom Joad derides.

I hope it is not merely professional pride which compels me to protest against the grotesque and fantastic nonsense which he writes in his most offensive vein about parsons. Listen to this (p. 352):

"My attitude to clergymen of the Anglican Church is ambiguous. When introduced to one, I experience a curious mixture of feelings. In the first place there is pity . . . because the church of the clergyman is so very empty . . . because the poor man is so rarely able to give a clear account of his beliefs; because he has been so bewildered by Darwin and Einstein and science generally; because I know that if he were to submit his beliefs to the test of dialectical discussion, any philosopher who knew his business could tie him into knots in five minutes and drag him through the mud of intellectual ignominy. There is amusement, too, because the clergyman cuts so odd a figure in the modern world; because he must strive by such various and curious methods to keep up with the times and bring to his Church a generation that has forgotten him, seeking by a hundred and one odd devices, by introducing into God's house

the strain of jazz bands, by christening in a blaze of publicity the newly born children of international prizefighters or footballers or by inducing the contemporary stars of the screen to preside at his dances, to sweeten the powder of unwanted religion with the jam of current entertainment."

We cannot quite see the relevance of these remarks in a book on God and Evil. They are quite absurd. Could "any philosopher who knew his business tie into knots in five minutes" the intellectual position of Inge, Temple, Barnes and Matthews who are all Anglican clergymen? The Professor of Philosophy in the University in which Doctor Joad is a lecturer—not a professor—is a convinced Christian writer. Has Joad tied his own chief into knots too or merely ridiculed him? And how many churches have introduced "jazz bands" and the other allurements mentioned, in order to get people to worship God? I do not know one.

We all smile when a man who has been in India for a week or two writes a book about it. It would be strange indeed for a man to write such a book on India who had only seen its difficult mountains through field glasses on a foggy day from a ship far out at sea during a storm! I hope Doctor Joad will arrive in the land of Christian experience. At present his mind is in a stormy sea and his vision is anything but clear. He has never set foot on shore and has only seen hills of difficulty from a distance. When he lands and explores and discovers he will write a much better, and a much more useful book than this. The trouble he will find then is that this present book has queered his pitch as a writer on religion, and gone far to wreck his claim to be a philosopher.

LESLIE D. WEATHERHEAD

The City Temple, London, England

**China's Religious Heritage.** By Y. C. YANG. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1943. pp. 196. \$1.50.

*China's Religious Heritage* is the first book to be written in English by a Chinese on the ancient religions of China. Most readers, with the previous dull and weighty tomes in mind, will probably regard it as the most readable and useful. It is in terms that the average educated reader will understand and it deals with the very phases of the Oriental religions that such a reader most desires to know about. In these respects the book is positively brilliant.

Probably no other man is so peculiarly fitted to produce a volume of that nature. As a Chinese educated first in his own country and steeped in its culture he possesses the requisite knowledge and sympathy toward that culture. As an active and devoted Christian he likewise possesses similar information of and sympathy for the great Western religion which has invaded and is permeating China. Added to this equipment is a thorough knowledge of both America and Europe and a penetrating insight into our psychology. Doctor Yang was educated also in the United States. Over and over again he has visited this country and has traveled across it time and again on speaking tours.

Doctor Yang was trained for the diplomatic service of his country and rose to an important position therein quite early in life. Then he resigned his office

in Peking to become president of Soochow University, his *alma mater* and the most important Methodist institution in China, when Chinese law made it necessary to install nationals in all educational administrative positions. When the Japanese invasion drove the university first to Shanghai and then to the interior, President Yang came to the United States. He did cultivation work for the missionary organization of his church, spent a year as Professor of Chinese Civilization at Bowdoin College, and was then drafted by his government to head up the speakers' bureau of the Chinese News Service.

So much has been said about the author because this background goes far to explain the nature and quality of the book itself.

Doctor Yang's volume is based on lectures delivered on the Quillian Foundation at Emory University. The author's purpose is to acquaint American readers with the outstanding qualities of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, and to relate these faiths to Christianity. He avoids the two extremes which mar so many similar works: an unreasoning iconoclasm which sees the Oriental religions as evils to be opposed and uprooted, and the maudlin sentimentality which finds nothing but excellencies in these systems and would construct a mongrel syncretism compounded of a few shakes of each thoroughly stirred into a few thin extracts from Christianity.

Doctor Yang is a Christian and he expects Christianity eventually to dominate China. This it will do, not by smiting and destroying outright the ethnic faiths, but by transforming them and absorbing them into Christianity, which will not become tainted in the process because it contains already the things true, beautiful and good which are found everywhere else.

He begins by a striking exposition of the biblical story of Jesus' conversation with the woman at the well of Sychar, showing thereby the necessity of an understanding of other religions on the part of Christians. The woman's question, "Art thou greater than our Father Jacob?" is the first question asked by an adherent of any ethnic faith of the missionary who commends Christianity to him. How, asks Doctor Yang, can the missionary answer unless he knows who the other man's Father Jacob is and wherein his alleged greatness consists?

Doctor Yang then goes on to discuss the religions of China. First he writes an illuminating and necessary chapter on "The Religious Significance of Chinese Culture." This is followed by three chapters on the essentials of the three non-Christian faiths, the very titles of which are descriptive: "Confucianism, the Art of Living"; "Buddhism, the Path of Escape"; "Taoism, the Law of Nature." Then there is a concluding chapter on "Christianity, the Way of Life."

If it be said that Doctor Yang has not made any original contribution to the subject of comparative religions, it may be replied that he *has* made an original contribution, in that interested people can and will read his book and thereby secure an insight into the whole problem which they probably would never receive had such a clear and interesting volume not come their way. There are no dull and dreary sections, no mumbling about Oriental philosophies in terms which discourage the forthright common sense of the average intelligent American. One who already has a shelf full of the other kind expresses the hope that this book will be read by all persons who are in any way interested, or open to interest, in this subject.

ELMER T. CLARK

The Methodist Board of Missions and Church Extension.

**Andre Gide and the Crisis of Modern Thought.** By KLAUS MANN. New York: Creative Age Press, Inc., 1943. pp. viii-331. \$3.00.

During the treacherous days of Vichy France, one notable Frenchman who remained in his native land was known to have refused collaboration with the Petain regime. With the American landing in North Africa and the occupation of all France by Germany, seventy-four-year-old Andre Gide was believed to have escaped across the Mediterranean to his beloved North African hills. Since then little had been heard of him. It was, therefore, with rejoicing that the literary world heard, by the Allied armies investing Tunis, that he was safe.

Andre Gide has been such a will-o'-the-wisp in modern thought and expression that he cannot be classified. Possessor of half a dozen souls, he still has kept an integrity of character which demands admiration. Representative of French Protestantism, influenced by the thinking of Kierkegaard, finding his authority (if he would admit any at all) in the Bible, he was yet known as "the immoralist," after the title of one of his books, from his association with Oscar Wilde and Lord Alfred and his impish cultivation of an aura of deliberate wickedness fostered by his disrespect of convention and of what people thought they had a right to expect of him.

The significance of Gide certainly does not lie in his popularity. Eleven of his books have been published in America. It is safe to say that few of us have read any of them (although *The Counterfeiters* has been in the Modern Library since 1931, *Travels in the Congo* was published in a cheap paper-bound edition, and *Return from the U.S.S.R.* threw a bombshell into the Communist controversy of 1937). It is the unusual person among us that is acquainted with more than two or three of his works. While his eminence does not come from a great congregation of followers, it is nonetheless real. The subtitle of Mann's book indicates his notability, for in his thought and activity is "the crisis of modern thought."

Klaus Mann, son of famed Thomas Mann and intimate and respectful friend of Gide, gives as helpful an insight into the protean intellect and soul of this Frenchman of Huguenot ancestry as we will probably have for a long time. Developing Gide's thought by a chronological analysis of his works, he has made the most logical presentation possible. He is careful and sensible in his judgments. He evaluates Gide only in relation to the whole of his works, for he with reason contends that Gide is not known in any one of his books. Each of them has only one aspect, but it does seem that most of his metamorphoses have been religious transformations. The Evil One, the demonic, is a ubiquitous and fascinating theme for him. Sometimes it seems that Gide is almost going to yield, but just before toppling over the brink he rebels and refuses the domination of fascinating evil. It is interesting to note that one would suspect, Melville and Whitman with Hawthorne as a possibility are the Americans who have exerted the greatest influence upon Gide.

Modern religious thought can scarcely afford to ignore Andre Gide. Mann will help us to a better comprehension of his stature and nature. He makes us realize that here is an intellect that has tried to deal with the most tormenting problems of life. We are stimulated to a less haphazard acquaintance with Gide's works, but also to a more discerning examination of life itself.

ROGER E. ORTMAYER

Methodist Minister, Madison, Ohio.



**Communion in the Messiah** (Studies in the Relationship Between Judaism and Christianity). By LEV GILLET. London: Lutterworth Press, 1942. pp. xiv-247. 12 s., 6d.

This is a monumental work dealing with a vital subject, as Israel has a destiny to fulfill which is closely connected with the destiny of the Church. The present tragedy of Israel, unprecedented in her history, makes the theme also timely. Although there is a prolific literature on the subject, the work deserves a place as the most scholarly and authoritative in its field. The pertinent literature Professor Gillet quotes is enormous, and equally so is his range of knowledge. But most valuable is his judgment resulting from a thorough mastery of a comprehensive literature coupled with a critical attitude that is constructive rather than destructive.

The author set himself the task of pointing out a new direction in the study of Jewish-Christian relationship, and this he has achieved with excellence. The volume has the following chapters: I. "Dialogue with Trypho"; II. "The Permanent Value of Jewish Tradition"; III. "Judaism and the Christian Creed"; IV. "The Messianic Hope"; V. "The Jewish Life of Grace and Its Relation to Christianity"; VI. "Christianity and the Earthly Problems of Israel"; VII. "Israel and the Mission." Within the scope of 247 pages the author realized the impossibility of dealing with these problems comprehensively. For further study of any of the topics the reader is referred to the primary and secondary sources.

A thorough knowledge of Judaism requires more than a knowledge of the Jewish religion, since "Judaism is not only a religion; it is the sum-total of all the needs of the nation, placed on a religious basis." Doctor Gillet has befriended many Jews, among them the eminent Hebrew-Christian scholar, Paul Levertoff, and has learned to know the Jewish soul.

Professor Gillet is not a Jew, but a Russian, and is a priest of the Orthodox Church. He hopes through this work to atone for the great historical guilt of the Greek Orthodox churches, mainly in Russia and Roumania, toward the Jews. Says Father Gillet: "They have often sinned by their silence, or by their acquiescence, or by their incitements."

The author should have pointed out more adequately that Christ gave new depth to the teaching of Moses and the prophets. Had he done this, he would not have, as he himself admits, idealized Judaism and the Jew. However, his appreciation of what is good in Judaism has not diminished his loyalty to the Scriptures and Christ an iota. The work is thoroughly orthodox and bears no traces of compromising with Judaism. In the chapter, "Israel and the Mission" (p. 185), Professor Gillet observes, "Jesus is the very centre of convergence. The scattered rays which gleam across the words of the prophets and rabbis are absorbed in the person of our Lord. All these elements are brought together and realized in Him."

The most successful and largest Jewish mission on the continent of Europe, that of the Rev. Dr. Arnold Frank, in Hamburg, Germany, till the Nazis closed it, is not mentioned in the chapter, "Israel and the Mission." The work, unfortunately, has numerous printer's errors which doubtless can be attributed to war-pressure casualties and probably will be rectified in the second edition.

FREDERICK A. ASTON

New York Jewish Evangelization Society, New York, New York.

**Preaching the Word of God.** By MORGAN PHELPS NOYES. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943. pp. 219. \$2.00.

In these lectures—worthy successor of the sixty-seven series which have preceded them in what has rightly been called the most influential lectureship on preaching in the world—a richly gifted and widely experienced pastor discusses with his fellow preachers the demands of his calling and the resources available for meeting them. The opening lecture, "The Word and the Preacher," elaborates the conviction that the Christian preacher is the proclaimer of an authoritative Word. "Hebrew History in one millennium did produce men through whom God could speak in a unique way, and through the Bible in which that message is recorded, God still speaks to men." It also insists that God has spoken to man through the history of the Christian church and "the preacher of the Word must make sure that his message grows out of that great tradition and is congruous with it." Another source of the authentic Word is the "day-to-day sharing of the varied life of the people to whom he preaches" and "the needs of the wider world in which the preacher and people together live their life." The lamentation that the pulpit is losing its authority has no place in the thinking of the minister who knows that "truth is always authoritative" and that the "minister can have as much authority as the truth of his message deserves—no more."

"The Word and the Church" reveals a wholesome regard for the Church as the agency through which the will of God is made known and by means of which God's aims will ultimately be accomplished. Genuine ecclesiastical reforms always come through men who have been nurtured at the altars of the Church. There is a danger at the present time that the Christian movement is "stronger in the great movements which command the headlines than in the ordinary churches which have to hold the line but which are too often very weak in the light of the challenge which confronts them." In the lecture "The Church and the World" recognition is given to the fact, so often overlooked by those who stridently ask why the Church did not start something or stop something, that the Church does not stand over against the world as a clearly distinguished entity. The discussion of the relation which the Church must sustain to the social order and to the present world crisis bears the marks of a mind that, under the load of pastoral responsibility, has sought, earnestly and honestly, to find the Christian answer to pressing and perplexing problems.

The emphasis of the lecture "The Word of God for Every Man" is that the Christian gospel recognizes the essential dignity and worth of human nature. In spite of all the frustrations to which human nature is subject in such a time as this, God has a word for the individual. It is the obligation of the preacher to make that word plain and convincing. "It is a sad day for the Christian church when people can go out after hearing any sermon which has not renewed their faith that even in a brutal and sordid world life can be greatly lived."

"Without a comprehensive knowledge of the modern techniques of counseling and intimate association with the wide range of individual and group needs for pastoral guidance and nurture, the lecture "The Word and the Pastor" could not have been written. It is evident the man who spoke here has not found the pastoral ministry boring or unrewarding. The closing lecture deals with "The Word and Worship." In this field Doctor Noyes speaks with the author-

ity of one who has given special attention to the material and methods of public worship. It is grounded in the conviction that Protestantism has scarcely begun to realize the values inherent in this area of church life and is full of constructive suggestions for those who have the responsibility for directing the people in their corporate search for God.

The pastor who reads this book will give renewed thanks to God for his high calling; others will recognize that it deals with that supremely important area in which the Church either wins or loses.

WILLIAM C. MARTIN

Bishop, Omaha Area, The Methodist Church, Omaha, Nebraska.

**A History of the Expansion of Christianity. Volume V, *The Great Century in the Americas, Australasia and Africa, A.D. 1800-1914*.** By KENNETH SCOTT LATOURETTE. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1943. pp. ix-526. \$4.00.

Professor Latourette's volume, *The Great Century, 1800-1914*, is his second one dealing with this chronological period, but turns from Europe and the United States to a discussion of the Americas, Australasia and Africa. Canada is included in this volume as well as Latin America. The author explains that the extent of the geographical regions covered and the great diversity of peoples surveyed may seem miscellaneous, but contact with Europe gives one thread of unification as was the case with Volume IV. The advantage to the reader lies in the fact that he may choose a region and confine his information, for example, to the West Indies, the islands of the Pacific, or Africa, south of the Sahara.

This series is, in fact, a new history of world civilization. A quick survey of the culture of each region under study is ably given. The amount of literature digested is amazing. It is not merely the special record of missionary activity that the author has mastered, but he has prepared for the layman a synthesis of geographical, economic, racial and political data that cannot be found assembled anywhere else. The controversy of Bantu, Boer and Briton in South Africa, for instance, is carried through many decades. The reader is given the whole frame of reference. Or he can take islands like the Hawaiian and learn exactly what conditions were, and the relations of Protestant and Catholic with each other and with the natives. Never does the interest lag. The volume, therefore, is not merely for the specialist, but also the lay leader.

With so much learning to admire, it is difficult to find flaws. In Australia, perhaps, the Roman Catholic work does not come to life as vividly as does the Protestant. On the other hand, in the treatment of Latin America, even the specialist will find many facts and interpretations new and fruitful to him. A lifework of travel and study enables the author to carry a torch illumination to each region. Depth and width of knowledge combined make this work unique. It should be in the library of every man who wishes to know not merely one country, but that country in comparison with others. Canada, to give an illustration, is seen not as by one who knows only Canada, but by one who brings the knowledge of development in other areas to the task. Facts and interpretations are incomparably interwoven throughout the volume.

FRANK J. KLINGBERG

University of California, Los Angeles, California.

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**Prayer for These Times.** By HARRY G. POST. New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1943. pp. 166. \$1.75.

Here is the tale of a businessman, with a wife and three children, who doesn't just talk about prayer, but really prays, alone, and with his family, and also conducts a school of prayer. This little book has the advantage of being written not by a professional, but by a layman, and in simple brief chapters which any high-school graduate can understand. The writer assumes God is real, personal and fatherly; that we live in a spiritual environment as real as the air we breathe. "Our aim is to pray that our very life will become a prayer." There is no *secular* life.

He comes right to earth and tells how prayer made him play golf for fun and not for business reasons; made him and his wife reorder their social life; and how a neighbor came to understand that she had no business spending so much time in meditation and so little on the family meals. He shows us his own children slowly making their prayers real. There are suggested prayers at the end of several chapters; also poems of thanksgiving.

There are provocative ideas in the book such as: humor is an aid to spirituality; church-going may be confusing to beginners in prayer; the heroism of the soldier is great but "it is easier to stand shoulder to shoulder with other men before the guns of the enemy than it is to foster Christian good will in all our day-to-day contacts in the days of peace"; while we wait on God in stillness, the subconscious mind has opportunity to work out its problems; "there isn't anyone who has ever used intercession for even a short time who has not had countless evidences of the power of intercessory prayer."

The author's discussion of the importance of prayer for victory is too brief to do justice to a subject so difficult as to cause one archbishop of my acquaintance to say, "I shall work hard for victory during the week, but it somehow seems presuming too much to ask God, in the church's worship, to give victory to my side," and which caused the Bishop of Chichester three years ago, to say, "The Church's supreme concern is not the victory of the national cause. Its supreme concern is the doing of the will of God whoever wins, the declaring of the mercy of God to all men and nations."

The book will have a deepening influence in these turbulent and crucial days.

ELMORE MCNEILL MCKEE

St. George's Episcopal Church, New York, New York.

**Life Out There.** By SGT. JOHNNY BARTEK. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943. pp. xviii-117. \$1.75.

Johnny Bartek, one of the Rickenbacker-raft crew, is a simple person who tells in his own words the story of eight men adrift on the ocean, the story of a return to religion and of answered prayer. In the twenty-one days of *Life Out There*, Johnny achieved a grasp of spiritual truths that normally would have taken a lifetime.

According to Bartek, this is what happened—"When we were out of food, when we weren't picked up, we didn't know what to do. That's when I opened the New Testament to really see what it did have to say." He and his companions read some parts of that Testament a hundred times. As these eight

men pulled their rafts together for the evening Scripture reading and prayer, they knew that their help was in God. God seems nearest when peril is greatest. "It is not hard to believe in God when death threatens," said one Navy Lieutenant in a recent letter. And so to these abandoned men, what seemed sure doom as they pushed away from the sinking plane, became an Odyssey of faith.

As they drew nearer to God, they grew spiritually. After fifteen days of drifting, they felt the desire to confess their sins and did so unabashed. Spiritual insight sprang full-bloom from their struggle. It was a religious experience without benefit of form or dogma. (Religion had been a matter of just church to Johnny up to this time.) When the first seagull was caught, these men thanked God, not aloud, but "by themselves."

As days passed and difficulties grew, Johnny's spiritual understanding came into its full stature. He accepted with deep seriousness all that he read in the Bible. When the men prayed frantically and fruitlessly that a second seagull might be captured, Johnny recalled that he had read, "Take no thought for your life what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink." He felt that they had failed because they were overanxious. When help did not come and the men grew weaker, Johnny concluded that they "were begging too much." He saw that God might have a purpose in not answering prayer. "But the way I looked at it, if we did get picked up earlier, we probably wouldn't ever give Him any thought again after we landed."

At any rate, these men did believe. A seagull lighting on Rickenbacker's hat was to them an answer to prayer. What are we to say about special acts of God? The fact is there. One wonders, however, whether God's power is not seen more clearly in the seeking and finding of spiritual security on the part of these men and in the fact, too, that these spiritual experiences remain vivid and real to them.

Johnny Bartek is an utterly unpretentious young man. It is evident that he is trying hard to stay himself. He found himself in the *Life Out There*, and he is making every effort to keep from losing that real self in the midst of all the publicity and attention. He was, and is, just plain Johnny Bartek, Czech-American boy, to whom Rickenbacker was just another "guy" and whose thought in the midst of the perils of the sea would drift to milkshakes and orangeade stands back home—but mostly to his mother. Bartek's sincerity is seen in his criticism of people who exclaim over the famous Testament, "'Gee, isn't the Bible beautiful,' you'd think they'd turn to a verse and stop and read it, just one verse. But not one of them do."

Religion gathers momentum from a book like this.

HAZEN G. WERNER

Grace Methodist Church, Dayton, Ohio.

**Towards Belief in God.** By HERBERT H. FARMER. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1943. pp. xiv-252. \$2.00.

This title is explicit: the work aims to aid those who *will* to believe toward belief in God. Frankly, courageously, Professor Farmer recognizes that no strategem can compel such belief, since all knowledge of truth falls short of demonstrative certainty, and especially since religious apprehension is contingent upon decisive experience between free persons Divine and human.



Three elements, not separable in living experience, are distinguishable in any awareness of God. First: to such as truly seek Him, God manifests Himself with "a certain compelling and unanalysable immediacy"—as light and color appear indisputably to the eye which fulfills the conditions of sight. This revelation by Himself of Himself is fundamental. Since Doctor Farmer stresses the conditionality and decisive nature of belief in God, it is unfortunate that he designates this element as "coercive"; it is coercive *if*—which is to say, it is *not* coercive.

Second: Confirming any awareness of the Divine, is the pragmatic element of belief. God is indeed a very present help in time of trouble. Belief in God makes it possible for man to be an ego without egotism, affords a sufficient reason and dynamic for moral endeavor, provides stability and strength for victorious living through tensions and conflicts and sufferings. Opponents of theism, quick to accuse of "wishful thinking," are ever forced to confess that the idea of God *works*. And it should be difficult, even for them, to escape the conclusion that it works so consistently and effectually because God works in and through the idea.

Third: Further confirmation of the intuition of God's reality may be found in the reflective element of belief. We all theorize; the only questions are, How much? How well? On the basis of its premise, that God is a purposive Person seeking to fashion men into His sons, and that therefore all religious significance depends upon free and right action of wills, theism could hardly proffer "apodictic proofs" of the existence of God. However, theism does make an inclusive and satisfying appeal to man's reason as he confronts the "riddle of the universe." It leaves less to mystery, contributes more in the way of comprehensive and coherent speculation, than any other kind of philosophy. And nowhere, even in dealing with the vexing problems of science and freedom, of pain and evil, does it commit contradiction.

In this compact volume, vividly written, there is a wise and honest and persuasive invitation to faith in the Father of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

HARRY M. TAYLOR

Calvary Methodist Church, East Orange, New Jersey.

**The New Order in the Church.** By WILLIAM ADAMS BROWN. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1943. pp. 189. \$1.50.

In a brief but important and timely book, written with exceptional understanding and clarity and dealing with the problem of interchurch co-operation on national and world levels, Doctor Brown places the New Order in the Church over against the New Order in the world. This Order, he points out, centers on the creation of a political organism sufficient to maintain peace, permit relative disarmament, and afford a structure within which the longer time problems can be worked out by democratic methods. It demands co-operation on an unprecedented scale and definite sacrifice of sovereignty by all nations.

Facing these demands of the age lie the churches, unable themselves to co-operate effectively. They urge participation of the nation in postwar collaboration but are themselves independent, jealous of their sovereignty and with only blueprints for a World Council of Churches. American denominations do not support adequately the agencies for co-operation which they have created, and are

extremely slow to give them power. Councils of Churches, with exceptions, develop very slowly and are not well financed. The churches are also confused by the number of their co-operative national agencies which have overlapping jurisdictions and multiple approaches.

Nobody knows the religious situation at home and abroad better than Doctor Brown. He has taught a generation of theological students. He is one of our most authoritative participants in the ecumenical movement. He has shared importantly in the co-operative religious movement in the United States.

What does Doctor Brown suggest? He paints a dark picture, as indeed is the fact. He emphasizes the time factor in what has to be done and yet presses for action, but only as fast as agreement can be achieved. He reveals in great detail the expressions of the New Order in the Church at home and in the World Council—very hopeful expressions. He does not discount organic union, but emphasizes the method of federation. He starts with God's gospel of redeeming love as the organizing principle. He asks for an approach of humility and open-mindedness. He suggests that we will get together as we worship and work together. Laymen must be helped to see their local churches in the setting of the denomination, and then of ecumenical Christianity, which means an awakening of the laity to interchurch co-operation. Denominational officials are in special need of education in co-operative relations. He urges a general staff, supported by research, to guide the policies of the churches. One persistent idea, appearing again and again, is, "Common action in the field of agreement; common study in the field of difference."

Altogether one of the most valuable books on the urgent problems of united church action, this is the more valuable because so brief and readable.

WORTH M. TIPPY

Kansas City Council of Churches, Kansas City, Missouri.

**Which Way Ahead?** By WALTER RUSSELL BOWIE. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1943. pp. xi-145. \$1.50.

Innumerable books and articles have been written, and countless conferences held, discussing the place which the Church should occupy in a world at war, and how her teaching and life should be united to make them effective in a post-war world. Very few of these literary productions and very few of these conferences give us practical working suggestions. They answer the question, *why*, but not the question, *what*.

Dr. Walter Russell Bowie's book, *Which Way Ahead?* deals with both questions and, while its analysis of the Church's failure on its human side to measure up to its responsibilities is keen and revealing, its suggestion for remedies and practical demonstrations of Christian living and action appeal to one as both helpful and genuinely illuminating.

After pointing out the spiritual crisis in the present time, Doctor Bowie proceeds to consider first "the eternal values which have our faith and loyalty," and then recognizes some of the handicaps under which the Church has labored. These handicaps are largely in her membership. There are the sluggish; those who are satisfied with secondary things; and last, but not least, those "who wish to identify the Church with their own social and economic interests." Summing these people up, it is those who wish to maintain the *status quo*, and who feel

perfectly satisfied with their own attainments in the Christian life and wish no disturbing changes. After these analyses of present conditions, the author lists the lessons which these days teach us. Primarily these are four: 1. The necessity for nation and church to rediscover their convictions and ideals. 2. The necessity of discipline. 3. The cost that must be paid for supreme objectives. 4. The inspiration of great loyalties, and the capacity of ordinary men for courage and sacrifice.

Under the head of "paying the cost," he outlines what is possibly the most original suggestion in the book. He suggests ascending orders in Church membership so that men and women would feel the impulse to grow as disciples of Christ and not remain where they were when they first became Christians. This suggestion has splendid possibilities and, while the author is thinking especially of membership in the Episcopal Church, it could be applied with a few insignificant changes to any Christian body.

He then lists the accomplishments that should lie ahead of the Church, which are these:

1. An accepted plan of self-disciplined education for the whole membership of the Church.
2. A more direct application of Christian principles to the social and economic order.
3. A Christian conception of postwar adjustments.
4. A readiness to seize vital missionary opportunity.
5. A determination to achieve genuine Christian unity.

These necessarily brief outlines do not do justice to the vigor and clarity of this book. Only careful reading, close study and real sympathy can do that. This reviewer believes that rarely within so small a compass have the needs and the possibilities of the Christian Church in this crisis been so adequately set forth.

FRANK A. McELWAIN

Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, Evanston, Illinois.

**The Bible in the Building of Life.** By Mildred A. Magnuson. Abingdon-Cokesbury. \$1.50. A comprehensive course for the upper elementary grades in weekday Christian education. It includes a teacher's book (250 p. volume) and two pupil's-aid books (48 pp. each).

**The Case for Christianity.** By C. S. Lewis. Macmillan. \$1.00. The writer of *The Screwtape Letters* and *The Problem of Pain* sets forth the essentials of belief shared by the present-day Church. These are based on the premise that until right is recognized, religion has no meaning.

**Christ for America.** By Horace F. Dean. Revell. \$1.00. An unusual handbook on the preparation and conduct of the new movement for evangelism by means of mass meetings.

**Children Need Adults.** By Ruth Davis Perry. Harper. \$1.50. From a vast nursery-school experience, this book points out the carefully balanced path that lies between the tyranny of the adult and the tyranny of the child.

**Some to Be Pastors.** By Peter H. Pleune. Abingdon-Cokesbury. \$1.50. An elaborated signpost for the guidance of the theological students and young ministers.

**The Word of God and the Reformed Faith.** Baker's Book Store, Grand Rapids. \$1.00. Scholarly addresses delivered at the Second American Calvinistic Conference in June, 1942, on the place of God's Word in every sphere of life.

**How the Church Grows in Brazil.** By J. Merle Davis. International Missionary Council. \$1.00. The sixth in a series of books covering the economic and social bases of the Evangelical Church, which are so closely paralleled in the development of the economic life in Brazil.

**Victory Over Fear.** By John Dollard. Reynal & Hitchcock. \$2.00. The second printing of a popular volume on fear from a scientific yet simple and direct approach.

**A Lost Passion.** By Edgar Blake. Abingdon-Cokesbury. \$1.00. Contemporary problems dealt with in contemporary terms, via a truth which is both contemporary and eternal.

**For All of Life.** By William H. and Charlotte V. Wiser. Friendship. \$1.00 cloth, 60¢ paper. A tribute to the glory of serving the Master in a foreign field where spiritual, educational, medical and social life merge under one roof.

**Truths Men Live By.** By George Mecklenberg. Revell. \$1.50. Vital messages on the fundamentals of Christianity.

**Beyond Agnosticism.** By Bernard Iddings Bell. Harper. \$1.50. A hand that reaches across the chasm of disillusion to draw the cynic and the bewildered back into the land of stable faith and truth.

**A Survey of Religious Literature.** By Charles S. MacFarland. Revell. \$1.50. This year's religious bookshelf in a volume.

**The Reformation Refugees as an Economic Force.** By Frederick A. Norwood. American Society of Church History. \$3.00. A study of sociological and historical interest casting a reflected focus on today's refugee problems via those of the past.

**The Story of Helen Gould.** By Alice N. and Henry N. Snow. Revell. \$3.75. A sympathetic and comprehensive biography of a woman whose total worth defied the confinement of book covers.

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